M. J. BONN

LA CRISIS DE LA DEMOCRACIA EUROPEA

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Traducción de J. García Díaz

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PRÓLOGO

Las páginas siguientes son reproducción alemana de unos pensamientos expuestos por mí en el verano de 1924 con el título The Crisis of European Democracy en las sesiones del Institute of Politics de Williamstown, Massachusetts. Aparecen en su forma original en las publicaciones de dicho Instituto a cargo de la Editorial de la Yale Press.

Si hice una edición alemana no fué porque quisiera dar al hombre fórmulas aptas para la solución de la crisis, sino porque considero provechoso bosquejar la confusión de fuerzas espirituales, económicas y físicas de donde aquélla surge. Espíritus de temple filosófico que, con un profundo desconocimiento de la realidad, no pueden prescindir de ocupar su espíritu en fáciles construcciones, considerarán como escepticismo impotente esta posición meramente espectadora. A mí me parece que los que no se consideran demasiado aptos para colaborar en la tarea cotidiana de la

vida política, realizan una actividad provechosa exponiendo claramente para todos sus observaciones, sin ostentar, pero sin negar tampoco, la posición propia. En este sentido sostengo, con uno de los grandes antepasados de la democracia moderna, John Milton: They also serve who only stand and wait *.

M. J. BONN

Mayo, 1925.

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* "También sirven aquellos que se limitan a resistir y esperar."

INTRODUCCION

En las declaraciones politicas de la anteguerra, los defensores del sistema del gobierno entonces predominante en Europa sostuvieron siempre que la democracia tenia, en efecto, varias ventajas como organización politica, pero que en la guerra fracasaria, especialmente como democracia parlamentaria. La experiencia ha demostrado lo contrario. En unanimidad politica y unidad de fines, las democracias occidentales excedian en mucho al sistema burocrático del oriente y centro de Europa. En las potencias occidentales, politicos conscientes de sus fines vencieron la intima separación entre la dirección de la guerra y la politica que paralizó durante casi todo el periodo bélico a las potencias centrales. La elevación de personalidades fuertes y enérgicas que, precisamente según la concepción continental, seria imposible en la democracia, no encontró obstáculo en las potencias occidentales, pero si en Rusia, en Alemania o en Austria, donde las pocas individualida-

des pujantes que podían abrirse camino de cualquier modo se destrozaban en la lucha inacabable de las intrigas burocrático-militares.

Cuando, después, la poderosa superioridad numérica del Occidente, que la dirección militar-burocrática de las potencias centrales ni reconoció a tiempo ni estimó certeramente, dió la victoria a los Aliados a pesar de todos los errores, pareció revelársele a todo el mundo la superioridad del sistema democrático. La vieja organización se desplomó primero en Rusia y luego en el centro de Europa. No hubo una mano que se moviera para defenderla. La Europa central se convertía a la democracia sin dar, a ejemplo de Rusia, el paso de la democracia al sistema soviético. Fuera de los Estados influenciados por Rusia, el sistema político democrático ha logrado imponerse en todo el mundo. Hoy late en sus formas diverso espíritu. La democracia turca se parece sólo exteriormente a sus modelos europeos, y el parlamentarismo hindú, en su aspiración a una completa autonomía, comprendió bien sus lemas, pero no el sentido de la civilización occidental. Entretanto, a la simple contemplación externa, los ideólogos occidentales consiguieron el fin hacia el cual creían dirigir la guerra. La democracia triunfó.

La cruzada emprendida por las potencias occidentales para consolidar la democracia ha corrido en cierto modo la suerte de las pasadas cruzadas: entusiastas profetas aparecieron anunciando la liberación del Santo Sepulcro. Pero cuando enmudeció el estrépito de la batalla, otra vez Jerusalén se encontró en poder de los infieles. Los cruzados se habían contentado con la adquisición de territorios y de poderío. De igual manera, esta última cruzada no trajo consigo tampoco el imperio milenario en que habían creído sus sinceros profetas. Ni siquiera produjo en modesta medida la satisfacción interna con que hubiera podido contarse como mínimo resultado de las experiencias bélicas. En todo el mundo reina político descontento. En toda Europa las instituciones que se han dado los pueblos son desestimadas por éstos, cuando no consideradas con un desprecio lleno de odio. Y esto, no sólo en las nuevas democracias surgidas en el corazón de Europa, en las cuales puede atribuirse el descontento a la falta de una tradición democrática, sino también, con la única excepción de Inglaterra, quizá en todos los países que intervinieron en la guerra.

El hecho de esta intervención es la mejor prueba del descontento existente. La guerra no ha hecho tampoco al vencedor ni más rico ni más

feliz. Extinta la gran pasión nacional con que los pueblos se precipitaron en la lucha, pasión que todavía alentaba después del armisticio y de la conclusión de la paz, por todas partes se comenzó, semiconscientemente al principio, a examinar el resultado, y se vió que el mundo se había modificado fundamentalmente. Y eso se vió sobre todo en paises como Alemania y Austria. Se pensaba con dolor en los dias pretéritos, en que la vida era relativamente próspera y barata. Entonces los salarios eran suficientes, había posibilidades de trabajo y los impuestos no agobiaban tanto. Sentíase por todas partes una poderosa prosperidad social. En el interior reinaban el orden y la seguridad; en el exterior, si no querido, se era respetado. Todo esto se había disfrutado bajo la Monarquía. Y aunque los que meditaban sobre ello veían claramente que la responsabilidad de aquella época de esplendor semejante a una edad de oro recaía sobre Guillermo II, a lo menos en cuanto a las manifestaciones externas, en la mente de la generalidad obraba el recuerdo de haber vivido bien bajo la Monarquía. Para esto no se necesita pensar ni mucho menos en aquellos sectores que mediante títulos, órdenes, reales o ficticios privilegios sociales habían sentido inmediatamente el solar esplendor de la cle-

mencia imperial. Las masas vieron claramente, en efecto, que participaban en el gobierno de la República y que eran iguales en derechos a las anteriores clases privilegiadas. Pero más claramente todavía veían que aquellos derechos políticos no habían mejorado su situación económica. La República democrática les había traído no sólo la igualdad social y política, sino también la destrucción de sus bienes por la inflación, el alza de precios, la baja de salarios y los impuestos en una medida no conocida antes. En todos los países las masas juzgan del valor de una forma de gobierno por las ventajas prácticas que le reportan. En Alemania no han olvidado que bajo la Monarquía estuvieron satisfechas. Y saben perfectamente que con la República no han vuelto a estarlo todavía. Se requiere una profunda labor de educación política para recordarles incesantemente que la República democrática heredó a la Monarquía en un momento en que ésta se declaraba en bancarrota. Si los Gobiernos aliados hubieran deseado, en efecto, sinceramente facilitar la lucha por la existencia a la República democrática alemana, no hubieran debido insistir, por el Tratado de Versalles, en la entrega de los «culpables de la guerra», sino que hubieran debido exigir que Guillermo II regresase como empe-

rador a Alemania y permaneciese en el Gobierno hasta el cumplimiento de todos los compromisos de las reparaciones.

En otros paises, el estado de cosas no es tan deslavorable; pero el descontento general, consecuencia de una guerra perdida—y toda Europa con excepción de Inglaterra ha perdido la guerra—, crea por todas partes una posición crítica que pone en duda y niega la forma de gobierno existente. La crisis de la democracia europea radica en parte en que los Gobiernos democráticos tienen que soportar el peso del desplomamiento europeo y los gastos de la reconstrucción de Europa.

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THE CRISIS OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

BY

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NEW HAVEN

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THE CRISIS OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

I

GOVERNMENT BY CONFERENCE

When the invitation to address the Institute of Politics at Williamstown was extended to me, I naturally realized the great chance given to me of presenting to you some of the problems with which my country is at present confronted. Whatever one's attitude towards Germany may be, nobody can deny the fact that the life of her people is crowded with problems. Whether it be the development of socialism in its varied shades or whether it be the effect of a currency revolution on a modern industrial society—for a revolution indeed it was—or whether it be a settlement of the reparation question, it would not be difficult, I think, to draw an interesting picture.

I have, however, purposely refrained from choosing an exclusively German topic. With the best intentions on the part of the lecturer, and with the fairest attitude on the part of the audience, there is always a risk that some statements might be considered "special pleadings," not worthy of the occasion.

But there is one big problem which is not an exclusively German problem, though it may have assumed some of its most serious features in that country—The Crisis of European Democracy.

As a result of the Great War, the governments holding sway in Central and Eastern Europe have

disappeared. All over that part of the world the place of old established monarchies has been taken by republican governments—democratic, nay, even radically democratic in their constitution. To bring about this change in the manner of government of these nations, a crusade had been preached all over the Western world—a crusade which in some respect has shared the fate of former aggressive missionary enterprise. They did not liberate the Holy Land, but they certainly brought vast territorial gains to some of the crusaders. In a similar way that great crusade did not result in the kind of millennium its advocates had promised; it has so far not even brought about that medium of general satisfaction its supporters have predicted.

As far as Germany is concerned, some people may say this failure is due to their want of experience in self-government; democracy, being new to the German people, cannot be expected immediately to yield its choicest fruits. I differ from this view for many reasons, chief among them the fact that the present discontent with democratic institutions in Europe is not restricted to new democracies like Germany. I need merely mention the word "Italy."

But I think there is one fact which must be clearly understood if we want to know the reason why in large parts of Europe democracy stands at a discount. It has little to do with forms of government, but a good deal with the material conditions of everyday life.

The War and its results have not made Europe richer and happier. After the great war-awakened national impulses had died down in all countries, people began to take stock of their actual losses. The man

in the street in Germany enviously remembered that living was fairly cheap, that wages were good and unemployment was scarce, and that money was stable, when William II was Emperor. His country was respected all over the world; he could move freely about; nobody asked for a passport, and in most cases nobody balked his desire when bent on emigration. To-day, living is expensive, wages are low, unemployment is widely spread, money has only just recovered its stability, passport regulations restrict his moving about at home, all sorts of control prevent him from going abroad. It is true, to-day he is living under a democratic government, which he and his fellow citizens can control. But he does not feel happy, while he was fairly content in the days of the monarchical government. Surely it is no wonder that he, not having studied political theories and their practical results, is inclined to come to the conclusion that democracy is not worth while having, if it means the present state of affairs, while monarchy is beginning to be identified with the good things he once enjoyed. Governments after all are judged by results, and as governments are all-powerful to the minds of simple people, a form of government which does not make them happy is a bad form of government. Even in America political principles have sometimes been held responsible for bad business results, when a "radical" party was in power and when business was slack.

It might be said with an appearance of justice that America is not very much interested in the working of forms of government in Central Europe. Their success or their failure means nothing to her, provided they are not strong enough to menace her.

This, to my mind, is a very short-sighted view. Democracy, as it exists to-day, was first made a living power in the United States. While in most respects America is indebted to the European metropolis for the cultural goods she has been able to enjoy, the position has been reversed on that account. America was the motherland of democracy and could look upon the European countries striving for democracy as upon her spiritual provinces. These provinces have long ago attained self-government, so to speak, as provinces are apt to do, when they have reached maturity. Autonomy is, however, very different from separation. It means copartnership, as long as it is based on spiritual and intellectual coöperation. Separation would come if Europe were to lose faith in democracy and were to return to a type of absolutism such as always held sway in Asia. Her doing so would wipe out all chances for the spread of democracy in the East, and with it deepen the gulf between the East and the West.

It would not do, however, to consider this general feeling of uneasiness and dissatisfaction as the main and only cause of what must be called the "Crisis of European Democracy."

Democracy has been described as "that form of government in which the ruling power of the state is legally vested not in any particular class or classes, but in members of the community as a whole. This means, in communities which act by voting, that rule belongs to the majority, as no other method has been found for determining peacefully and legally what is to be deemed the will of a community which is not unanimous."[1]

[1] Lord Bryce, *Modern Democracies*, Vol. I. p. 23.

In the course of history, democracy has assumed various forms. That form of democratic government which is so violently challenged to-day, may fitly be called "parliamentary democracy." There are other types of democratic government, which I need not describe here in Massachusetts, the home of the town meeting. It is possible to evolve a system of government for large units somewhat related to these direct forms of democracy, a system where the people elect their chief officers for a term of years, and leave them fairly unfettered in the transaction of their duties. The American constitution has occasionally been described by continental writers as such a system of quasi direct democracy, fairly free from the incubus of parliamentary institutions. No less a personage than Lothar Bucher, the intimate collaborator of Bismarck, and a vehement opponent of the parliamentary system, held this view. Though a system of "direct democracy" can be devised and may perhaps play a part in the settlement of the future, democracy, as existing in Europe to-day, is "parliamentary democracy."

The parliamentary system and democracy are, however, by no means identical. Parliament was originally the representative of the people, or of influential groups of the people, in opposition to the Crown. It grew by protecting the people against the encroachment of their monarchical rulers. Its growth led to the development of a kind of "political dualism." The people organized in parliament and the monarchs acting by divine right faced each other and negotiated their conflicts, not by force of arms, but by way of conference. Parliamentarism really stands for the principle of "*government by conference*" as

opposed to the principle of "*government by force.*" But parliamentarism as such does not stand for democracy. The greatest days of the British parliament were perhaps the days before the Reform Bill, when the mass of the people had no vote whatsoever. And in the parliament which claimed the right to make laws for the American colonies, which certainly was a duly elected parliament, neither the colonies nor the bulk of the British people were represented. There have been many well known parliaments—I mention only the former Hungarian parliament (not to speak of to-day)—which were but representatives of a minority, a racial minority in many cases, and were fighting democracy with all their strength.

When the struggle of the British parliament with the Crown had come to a successful end, political dualism was finally overcome. For all practical issues sovereignty rested in the Houses of Parliament. From that time on, political power was mainly undivided in those countries which enjoyed parliamentarism to the full. The nation elected its representatives. These representatives, the parliament, chose a committee, so to speak, which carried out the functions of government. It depended on having a majority in parliament. It was responsible to that majority and to that majority only. Political dualism had come to an end. A "monistic conception of power," such as had existed in the days of absolute rulers, began to prevail once more. Parliament was all-powerful. As long as the government had a majority, they could practically do no wrong, provided they did not violate some unwritten tradition or infringe a written constitution.

This political "monism" was however rather de-

ceptive. With the advent of a democratic franchise, the electorate began to comprise many shades of opinions and many groups of interests. Each group, especially each economic group, stood for different separate aims. Each single interest did not command sufficient power to impress its will on the nation. Majorities had to be formed by a combination of various, often antagonistic groups. The policies followed by different governments were becoming very intricate, for very often they were the direct outcome of a more or less complicated system of "log-rolling." Parliament was no longer the united representation of the people against the Crown, it became a representation of the different interests represented, bitterly fighting each other. But it remained a conference, though sometimes the conference assumed the features of a market place. For the essence of parliamentary government was *governing by debate,* fighting out differences of opinion and diversity of interests *by means of argument in open conference, not by crushing them by physical force. Persuasion of the opponents, not intimidation by physical threats,* was the aim. In that way, parliamentarism stands as a definite method of settling conflicts by argument, and not by coercion.

This chief characteristic of parliamentarism as a political system is clearly discernible in the world's changing attitude towards foreign affairs. Nobody doubted before the War that conflicts within an individual nation must be settled by way of conference, and not by an appeal to arms. It was the chief object of a progressive foreign policy to substitute this method of conference and argument in foreign affairs for the call to arms. As a result of the War,

there has been a great setback. In many countries people are quite willing to-day to settle their interior difficulties by an appeal to arms. Instead of gaining in the field of foreign affairs, parliamentarism as a method is to-day on its defense in home affairs.

Parliamentarism is not only a method for settling differences by way of conference. It has another important function to fulfill. It is a method of choosing a nation's leaders by way of popular elections. No doubt this can be done regardless of parliament. Wherever there is direct democracy, the people's leaders are chosen by what is practically a direct vote; that is the American practice, the method of the American constitution.

Wherever that practice is not followed—in the larger European countries this system is practically non-existing—the nation's leaders are chosen indirectly by means of parliamentary elections, whenever the people have gained full power. This is perhaps not always a good method. It does not always put the right man in the right place, or, what is worse, it sometimes gives a wrong man an important place. But it is a method of its own, very distinct and quite separate from the methods which were in use in preparliamentary days, when the nation's heads were God's anointed and when they appointed their assistants by their own divine right.

The rulers of continental Europe have governed their people for centuries by means of a highly qualified bureaucracy. Wherever monarchical governments prevailed in their struggle against medieval corporations, they tried to centralize power in their own hands. Having centralized it at the seat of the government, they had to spread their activity all over

the country, with the assistance of a highly complex administrative hierarchy. In the provinces, in the counties, in the municipalities, the heavy hand of the central government was felt. By means of deputed administrators, local life was stripped of self-government to a much greater degree than in Anglo-Saxon countries. France has been the classical soil for this development. The executors of the royal will were from an early date highly trained bureaucrats —people who had received a systematic, technical education for the special tasks of administration entrusted to them. They were not elected by their fellow citizens, they were appointed by their masters. As the personal power of royal governments decreased the part played by the bureaucracy in the life of continental nations expanded enormously. For with the development of public opinion and with economic progress new problems arose.

The bureaucrats formed a coherent body of trained, efficient administrators. They were, it is true, appointed by their royal masters, but they were not as a rule appointed arbitrarily. They had to show by examinations that they possessed certain qualifications. They developed a class spirit of their own, differing in many ways from the spirit of the groups from which they came. They formed, so to speak, a state within the state. They were experts trained for power, who considered it as their natural right that the leading posts in the state should be handed to someone from their own set. They often formed factions among themselves, frequently fighting each other bitterly, and developing a very acid "party spirit," but they presented a homogeneous front towards all other groups of the people.

They strongly opposed the advent of parliamentary government in continental countries. They looked upon the people as their wards, whose interest they, as trustee, were bound to further, as the people were not competent to manage for themselves. They considered it partly as folly, partly as an encroachment upon their rights, when these people insisted on popular representation, and when their representatives wanted to run the public business. The history of the growth of parliamentary institutions in continental Europe is much more a history of the struggle between the bureaucracy and the people than between the royal power and the people, the bureaucracy, of course, using the principle of the divine right of kings as their chief argument when insisting on their freedom from parliamentary control. Long before the great European crisis, their position had been badly shaken. Even in countries like Germany, the power of parliament was steadily growing, notwithstanding the stout resistance of the bureaucracy. One had to go to Russia or to British India, after the Morley-Minto reforms had been inaugurated, to see the struggles of the old dualistic system in its earlier phases.

As long as the theory of political dualism, namely, the division of sovereignty between king and parliament, continued, the bureaucracy was not really responsible to parliament. Moreover the parliamentary leaders could not regularly aspire to the highest posts in the land. The advent of full parliamentary government in Central Europe changed this completely. Bureaucratic administration was not abolished. Quite the contrary, the great extension of government activities all over the world has greatly

increased the numbers and the weight of the bureaucratic element. In those countries, however, which had but recently introduced democratic government, the bureaucracy was bound to lose its first place in the state. Men elected by the people were made Prime Ministers; they chose their cabinets from their trusted political friends. Some of them had technical qualifications, others had not. In both cases they were elected because they were trusted, not because they were competent in a technical sense. The bureaucracy considered themselves competent, and themselves only. They had proved by examinations, and by careful sifting after examination, that they were fit to shape the fate of men. They resented the successful competition for the highest posts of unqualified, unproven intruders. For they realized, and rightly realized, that the tasks of governments to-day were far bigger than they ever had been in the past. They questioned, and they perhaps questioned rightly, the wisdom of entrusting such heavy responsibilities to untried men. The better their own bureaucratic training had been, the higher were the standards of professional capacity and professional honor to which they had been accustomed, and the greater was their horror of what they considered parliamentary and political corruption. They had long ago become callous towards that form of political corruption by which an influential party or a powerful group voted pecuniary advantages to their supporters as a class. But they sincerely hated the "spoils system." They objected to promotion for party service. They did not always realize that the art of inspiring confidence in the people and the ability of persuading the people to some perhaps unpopular line of action, were quite

as essential to real leadership as the understanding of a complex problem. They often forgot that will power and common sense are qualities which cannot be acquired by technical training, nor guaranteed by examinations, and cannot be made available by careful appointments. They overrated the technical elements in politics, and underrated the psychological and political side. They did not realize that it is fairly easy in an educated nation to get good expert advice, but it is very difficult to find a man who can make up his mind and is willing to stand by his advisers.

In European countries there existed a bureaucratic mechanism unknown in the United States or in England. This bureaucratic mechanism is very difficult to handle, especially when the people comprising it are conscious of their own technical superiority. There is no doubt that a capable, thoroughly trained civil servant is superior to the average member of parliament in that respect. It is natural for the politicians, being bad hands at it, to be somewhat inclined to underrate the importance of bureaucratic administration. That does not matter very much in a country where the bureaucracy have not an exaggerated idea of their own importance. Civil servants in America and in England presumably smile a little when they have to train an inexperienced new chief fresh from the political arena. But in the United States as well as in England, the civil servants know their places. They never claimed the right to the highest political posts of the country because they had qualified by examinations, or because they had had so many years of service. Their legal status was defined by laws passed by parliament. As an

order they were the creation and the belated creation of a modern parliament which had seen fit to pass a self-denying ordinance against their own right of making appointments. Parliament had given them their places; it had not taken them away from them. In continental countries like Russia, Germany or Austria, things were very different. The highest posts of the state have always been within the reach of the best qualified members of the bureaucracy. The changes which the parliamentary system brought about deprived them of ever getting these biggest prizes. While before they had been the first in the land, they were now, so to speak, degraded. Formerly they decided the policy which was to be carried out; they chose the means which were to be used for attaining it. Of course they had a sovereign whom they had to gain over first, but as they were strong, hard-working specialists, they nearly always got what they wanted. To-day they are the servants of a cabinet upon whom they often look as incompetent usurpers. They remember the days when they ruled the state. They remember it, and remember that they did it well. They see their parliamentary successors; they may acknowledge that they are well-meaning people; but whatever they do, they do not seem to succeed. Surely that shows that they are not fit.

The enormous difficulties confronting the modern democratic rulers are continually providing their critics with illustrations of parliamentary failures. They compare the evident efficiency of the bureaucratic administration before the War with the lamentable shortcomings of parliamentary government in the present European chaos, utterly oblivious of the fact that most of the giants of bygone days would

look very small when faced by the titanic problems of to-day.

Public opinion in many cases naturally takes the same view. When a government does not solve the questions confronting it, does that not show plainly enough that the system of composing it is wrong? Continental opinion is somewhat different from Anglo-Saxon, and especially from American ways of thinking. It believes in "expertism." An expert is a man who can prove his qualification for a job by having been at the job for a long time, having presumedly obtained it through examinations. Anybody not properly qualified is distrusted; his getting a job by elections is considered the beginning of corruption. The idea that public appointments can be given to a man as a result of party loyalty is abhorrent to the average citizen. In that respect the man in the street is identifying his interests with those of the deposed bureaucracy. He has been taught to look upon bureaucratic government as upon some quasi divine institution. There is an old German saying: "The man to whom God has granted an appointment is sure to get from him the gift to fill it." This conception of the fitting of the man to the job by an automatic process of divine grace is certainly not repugnant to the faith of the ordinary professional politicians in an old established democracy. The popular mind in Central Europe is rather inclined to restrict the working of divine grace to such officeholders as have duly passed the prescribed examinations.

II

THE THEORY OF VIOLENCE

THE essence of the parliamentary system is the principle of government by conference. It is based on the conception of some deeply seated psychological motives affecting men's actions. It really starts from the assumption that men are reasonable beings who can be convinced by arguments, that they are fairly decent, honest beings whose passions can be allayed and whose widely divergent interests can be conciliated, if you only address the right arguments to that supreme human quality of theirs—sweet reasonableness.

There is another conception of government, taking quite another view of human nature, on which the foreign policy of all countries has been conducted in the past. It is based on the assumption that man is essentially vicious, that he is in the grip of violent passions which cannot easily be controlled, that his unsavory appetites and his evil instincts are the facts one has to deal with in real life. One can govern him only by making him bow to authority, which means government by obedience, government by force. People cannot be argued into goodness, they have to be forced into decency. The only way to deal with them successfully is to act on the principle that you have to deal with brutes. Machiavelli was perhaps the most brilliant exponent of that theory of government; and one of its chief practitioners to-day is Mussolini, who is never tired of appealing to Machiavelli's authority.

This latter theory was embodied in the practice of

governments when carrying on their foreign policy, while the application of the former theory was mainly reserved for home consumption.

In the years preceding the War the principle of "government by conference" was undoubtedly making headway in many directions. It was even hoped that the day might come when it could be applied to foreign relations. The various movements aiming at an international understanding, somewhat on the plan of a League of Nations, were the outward evidence of this development. But there was a counter movement clearly visible even in the days before the War, a movement which might be named "social militarism," in so far as it adapted the principle of "government by unquestioning obedience," the principle on which military action must be based, to the sphere of civil government. The great movement of colonial expansion which started in the beginning of the 80's was really a flat negation of the principle of "government by conference." Its aim was the annexation of new territory. The territories concerned were inhabited by what might be called low-cultured races, by races who were unable to defend themselves against the onslaught of a technically superior civilization, and who easily came under the sway of European or American masters. These masters have accomplished a good deal of very sound, constructive economic work in the countries thus annexed by them. From an economic point of view there was a marvelous development of the tropics. Intertribal wars ceased, unpropitious social customs disappeared; pestilence was eradicated. Numbers increased and standards of living rose. Honest administration prevailed, where corruption had been rife. And this de-

velopment was achieved by the exertion of a very small amount of physical force.

But from a political point of view the populations of the colonial territories inhabited by colored people were subject races, whose consent to the rule of their white masters had never been asked for. They did not participate in the shaping of any policy affecting their fates. They were "wards" of the government, not partners. They were ruled everywhere by a bureaucracy far more powerful, and in its own way perhaps even more efficient, than the European bureaucracies had been, who had struggled without success against the encroachment of the parliamentary system.

Thus a curious antithesis arose: As parliamentary institutions based on the principles of government by conference were spreading slowly all over Europe, government by force was gaining ground afresh in all the territories newly acquired, and it was developed marvelously on its technical side in old colonial provinces like India. The authority for using force emanated in many cases from the same bodies —the parliamentary governments of the world— whose own existence was based on the denial of force, as a method of government.

Whenever a series of facts in political life does not correspond freely with existing political theories; efforts are made to qualify those theories to a greater or lesser degree. The academic applicability of the principle of government by conference all over the world was scarcely denied. But it was pointed out that, as the evolution of parliamentary government in Europe had taken many centuries, its immediate application to backward races was out of the question.

They had to be educated before they were ripe for the exercise of that full-blown political liberty which had been and which remained the ideal of the advocates of democratic parliamentary government. To educate them to enable them to shoulder the burden was the task set before their white masters. There is no doubt that the best of them honestly and sincerely believed in the possibility of leveling up the subject races to that splendid position which they had obtained for their own kith and kin. But there is no doubt, on the other hand, that to many of them time was of no object, and that they were in no hurry to relinquish their self-allotted task of leading a backward race from the depth of utter darkness to the heights of dazzling light. They not only valiantly shouldered the white man's burden, they thoroughly enjoyed doing it, though indulging sometimes in a good deal of sentimental piffle about the weight of the load.

Moreover the application of the principle of government by force abroad, which, after all, is the meaning of Imperialism, affected men's attitude towards the problems of government at home. If the colored races were fit subjects for an autocratic, though benevolent, form of government, because they had not yet developed the capacity of governing themselves, it might be assumed without much questioning that there were large masses of people at home whose economic and intellectual status had not given them much chance to prove their fitness for self-government. Were the agricultural populations of a country, who till lately had been serfs, accustomed to the sway of their masters, really much more fit by character and understanding to participate as equals in government by conference than

were the members of some highly developed native race, who had but recently lost self-government on account of the technical superiority of European arms?

The acquisition and the developing of colonies thus gave a new strength to the old established theories of government by force. It provided them with a new moral aspect; for the government and the orderly exploitation of the backward races was not considered any longer a privilege granted to white conquerors. It became the "white man's burden," a profitable though onerous task laid upon the back of a masterful race of white men, who might have been unwilling to shoulder it if their own interests only had been consulted, but whose strong altruistic feelings tempted them to take it upon themselves in the interest of mankind, as long as it was a paying proposition.

The outcome of this movement was that, even in countries where parliamentary government was long established, men arose who objected to the parliamentary system. Their objections were eagerly welcomed in countries where the political dualism between the Crown and the bureaucracy, on the one hand, and parliament, on the other hand, had not yet completely disappeared. The reactionaries in Central Europe and in Russia were, of course, greatly strengthened by them. Anybody pointing to the excellent results achieved by parliamentary government in England was a good deal inconvenienced by the fact that from 50 to 60 millions of white people within the British Empire might enjoy the blessings of self-government, but from 300 to 400 millions were

ruled by what was practically an irresponsible though very efficient bureaucracy.

The attack on parliamentarism was led more vehemently in France perhaps than anywhere else. The group of people united around *l'Action Française* found a brilliant and ruthless exponent of their anti-parliamentary theories in Charles Maurras. Life to them was action. The essence of parliament was talk. Those nations only flourished who acted; while those people decayed who entrusted their fate to the hands of manufacturers of "hot air," to "wind-jammers," and "chatterboxes." Government by conference was implicitly condemned, because it was government by discussion. What is called reason was nothing to them but stale arguments culled from out-of-date books. Government by action was praised, because it did not argue. Deep down in the minds of the men who advocated these ideas was the theory, or rather the conviction, that the gift of government is handed to some men by Divine Providence, that they must merely follow their instinct to do right by their nation, and that they must not lose time and energy in convincing by argument people who appealed to reason, on the assumption that the race of men was fit to be reasoned with, and that government was a "process of reasoning" rather than one of "ruling." The diaries of the dilettante soldier statesmen of old Europe, like Count Waldersee, are full of such ideas.

Any theory of government based on force and violence is challenged, and has always been challenged, by a "theory of violence." Government by conference is possible only if all the classes interested in government are allowed to participate in the conference. Wherever governments have denied that right, where

people, or large sections of people, have been excluded from parliamentary representation after they have become conscious of political desires, a struggle is bound to come, and has come everywhere between unrepresented people and their governments. Where these governments systematically denied enfranchisement or proper representation, as was for a long time the case in Russia, their own appeal to force and authority was answered by an appeal to physical force and murder. This appeal to physical force from the excluded classes or races has often been used as a mere weapon of agitation, with the object of gaining representation. When the object was achieved and proper representation was gained, minatory agitation was allowed to subside, though in many cases the leaders of a violent popular movement have had difficulties in allaying the passions they themselves had roused. But where the spirit of violence has been sufficiently deep-seated the ultimate concession of participation in government is not really considered essential. Where a government has been acting by force and not by mere talk, the enemies of such a government are not fighting for the right to talk; they too are acting. The place of the argument is taken by the bomb. In most cases this has been a transitory state of affairs, giving place to constitutional agitation whenever there was a chance for such. In others the spirit of violence has temporarily been lulled to sleep, awakening from time to time at the slightest provocation.

Similar movements are bound to spring up in cases where proper representation exists, but where for some reason or other that representation is too small to carry out the wishes of those represented by it or to

safeguard their vital interests. When that representation cannot be enlarged, and when it is out of the question that their arguments can influence the will of a majority, because the minority as well as the majority are permanently facing each other as enemies whose interests, racial, for example, clash, and cannot be settled by argument, most likely an appeal to force will take place. The Irish problem is a case in point. As long as the Irish representation could not influence the British Parliament in such a way as to bring about the consummation of Ireland's desires, the advocates of physical force played a large part in Irish affairs. Their influence immediately diminished,—though it did not completely disappear,—when the ruling nation showed its willingness to discuss Ireland's claims and to favor them by parliamentary action. Physical force can be the weapon of the murderer. It can in other cases be organized revolution, or systematically planned secession. Just before the War, when the Irish question seemed to have reached a final solution, a movement arose in Ulster which showed the world at large that physical force cannot be completely ignored in home affairs, as long as there are permanent minorities unwilling to acknowledge the right of majorities. It was not merely an attack on a majority, but a real revolt against parliamentary democracy, when that democracy was no longer willing to safeguard those interests Ulster considered vital. For the movement swaying Ulster in the years 1912-1914 was the appeal to physical force of a minority properly represented in parliament, and thus taking part in government by conference, against the rule of a majority.

Thus, even in the days before the War, forces were

at work trying to supplant government by conference by an appeal to arms, or, to put it in another way, trying to introduce the methods of foreign affairs into home affairs. Wherever there are permanent minorities, with no, or little, chance of ever growing into majorities, or wherever the transformation of such minorities into majorities must be slow, there is a considerable danger of a revolutionary attitude of such minorities. Minorities are apt to be arrogant. Majorities, it is true, are not always humble, but minorities are inclined to think that, because they are different from the majority, they are superior, and, because they are superior, they have the right to remain such as they are. They rather look upon the majority as a rabble. Why should they discuss their own birthright with a rabble they despise? They stand for their own interests and they are not willing to let their own interests be trampled down in the interests of a majority they despise.

The aristocratic strata in European society are very often inclined to take that attitude. Feeling superior, they have no desire for assimilation. They don't want those distinctions taken away which to them mean superiority. They will not bow to the rule of the majority. If the minority is coherent enough, it is more than likely that it will not be content with a tacitly assumed superiority. It will consider itself entitled to impress its views upon the majority. This spirit, which imbued the Southern whites in this country in the years preceding the Civil War, is the spirit directing self-conscious minorities all over the world. And wherever this is the case, wherever the minority considers itself superior to the majority, they have not much use for government by confer-

ence, where they may perhaps demonstrate their superiority by the excellence of their arguments, but where they are always bound to be out-voted. They are, in their own views, a minority chosen by Providence, who are not bound to submit to that less select rabble which calls itself majority. It does not make much difference whether these people are self-conscious Southern planters, Prussian Junkers, law-abiding Ulster business men or French syndicalists. The pretended social superiority can always be explained by more or less scientific allusions to different racial strains. Any class which has established social ascendancy or is trying to establish it can always get some pseudo-expert to demonstrate as an uncontested fact its exclusive ownership of some wonderful qualities. These qualities are supposed to have been transmitted to them from far-away ancestors by the process of inheritance. The less favored races must be content to take their place. Aboriginal sin, disqualifying men for the blessings of the Kingdom, is supplanted by the miracle of germinal constitution, which settles men's place in the world that is.

These ideas, prevailing formerly among aristocracies, were given a new lease of life in the syndicalist theories, as they were elaborated before the War by Georges Sorel in his very suggestive *Réflexions sur la Violence,* closely corresponding, according to their author, to some phases of Henri Bergson's philosophy. The organized working class, constituting a minority, are not bound to wait for the fulfillment of their desires on the deliberations of discursive conferences, where professional "carpet-baggers" do a great deal of talking for the apparent

benefit of the nation and the real benefit of their own pockets. They can take their own fate in their own hands, and impress their will on society. They evidently cannot do so by parliamentary methods, as long as they are a minority. They are bound to remain a minority for a long time to come. But they need not wait.

Sorel's views are closely related to the opinion of Maurras—that parliamentary government is a government by talkers. The working class has no interest whatsoever in sending representatives to parliament, for the mere atmosphere of the council chamber contains such poisonous air that the strongest advocate of workingman's right quickly becomes infected with the virus of bourgeois quibbling. The working class have not the slightest interest in waiting for the day when they may become a homogeneous majority, a majority strong enough to discuss successfully with the other party the conditions under which the working class are willing to live. Rather they are in a hurry. It may please their bourgeois masters to discuss with them the share of the nation's income they ought to get according to some economic textbook. To them it is not a question of reason or of science. To the bourgeois economic science is merely an extract of the existing world, condensed in a textbook; they are going to maintain it as long as they have the power to do so. When the workers have sent a few members into parliament they treat them as good fellows and they appeal to their reason and make them feel proud of being "select." And the workers elected members of parliament are so delighted with the jobs they have got and the jobs they may get in time to come that they

forget the interests of those who elected them and desert their class. There is no need for resorting to the clumsy method of bribery, which in most cases is a mere waste of money. Why should one spend money when one can achieve one's object by simple talk?

But there are other and more efficient ways of action than preparing votes for the ballot box. In a complex modern society physical force of a military or of a police character is not the only force available. Modern governments cannot be carried on without a revenue. This revenue is provided for by the taxpayer. Refusing this revenue has long been one of the people's chief weapons in their struggle against their absolute masters in days gone by. The parliamentary system practically owes its safety, if not its origin, to the power of the people represented by it of withholding or granting revenue. Wherever there has been a struggle between the nation and the government, the question of withholding the revenue has played a decisive part. In modern days in the Indian non-coöperation movement of Mr. Gandhi, this, for example, was the pivotal point. This use of economic power is, however, not restricted to the struggles between government and people, at least not in a complex modern state. Modern society is based on the division of labor and services. If one class withholds its services, which are needed under this system, society is bound quickly to go to pieces. An organized working class, refusing its labor services, can hold up the whole mechanism of a modern community. This being so, a minority is no longer restricted to the use of physical force, which has to be applied positively by means of military coercion. To

withhold service, to strike on a large scale, until one's objects are achieved, the use of social negation, are quite sufficient for making the minority the ruler of the state. A general strike for the purpose of attaining political aims, not merely for the object of raising wages or improving conditions of labor, has thus become a terrible weapon in the hands of a self-conscious organized labor minority. This minority, according to syndicalist ideas, has not only the right to use this weapon; it is morally bound to do so when its interests are at stake. Violence, according to them, is not wicked. It is natural. Nay, it is essential to further progress. Social peace is merely an ideal with which the sleek bourgeois are trying to put to sleep those elements of society who have not yet enjoyed the benefits of modern civilization. They want to get their share of them, whenever they feel capable of enjoying them, but they don't want to wait until the owners of all the world's goods after lengthy deliberations are ready to share them with some deserving newcomers.

These ideas of Sorel are based on the theory of class warfare outlined by Karl Marx. Karl Marx' leading political idea was that in modern society classes are facing each other just as hostile armies confront each other on the battlefield. This is not a figure of speech; it is real fighting they are bent on, and they must go on fighting until the aim is won. The aim is a society in which private ownership of the means of production is abolished. When private people no longer control production, equality is possible, and when that is the case there is a chance of a real permanent democratic regime. But till that day there must be war and real fighting, but it need not

be fighting with the gun. The theorists of class warfare, the class struggle, are not averse to real shooting. They are quite willing to use guns, and to use them liberally, provided they have the biggest guns on their side. But they realize that they need not sacrifice human lives by what is in some ways an antiquated method of warfare if they can have more modern warfare, the warfare of the general strike and of social sabotage. Karl Marx as well as Sorel has used everywhere military terms. They described society and society's problems in the language of the military expert, and it is by no means an accident that the most capable of their pupils, if pupil he can be called, who himself is a master,—Lenin,—was always using terms of military science, of strategy or of tactics. Though to him class warfare mostly meant warfare without military weapons, it was a real war; a war of extermination of the enemy, the bourgeois capitalists. Where he could do it, as was shown in Russia, he was quite willing to exterminate them and not to make any apologies for doing it. It was war, legitimate war to him.

But there is one fundamental difference between Marx and Sorel. To Marx the development of society is due to the action of inherent social laws. Man can discover these immanent laws, he can put obstacles in their ways, or he can facilitate their working by not trying to impede them. He cannot change them. His will is as powerless to divert society from the lines of movements it must follow in accordance with its own constitution as it would be to deflect the rays of the sun, which emanate in accordance with the proper constitution of that luminary. Society cannot be made in accordance with the whims of men.

The forces constituting it are determining it. Sorel, on the other hand, does not believe in a preordained society. He laughs at reason, which analyzes society and tries to take it to pieces in the hope of readjusting it again, as a child may do with a clock. Passion and will make society; it is not bound by a prescribed plan. They are free to act and free to build, provided they are strong enough and leave aside those childish rules which we call reason. That is the creed of the social revolutionaries, is the creed of the soldiers in the Great War, and it became later the creed of Lenin and Mussolini.

III

THE PRACTICE OF VIOLENCE

In the years before the War, parliamentary government, *i.e.*, government by conference, was spreading in one direction, while, owing to the growth of colonial possessions and the rise of the creed of Imperialism, government by obedience was developed in others. While the belief in the powers of conciliation was gaining ground all over the world and while bold plans for international coöperation were being laid, new theories of violence were evolved in the studies and tentatively applied to the problems of practical life.

The Great War meant the triumph of the theory of violence. The Great War differed from other wars in one respect: it was not a mere professional war. Most wars in days gone by have been fought by people whose business it was to deal with the enemy in accordance with approved military rules. The Great War was a war of nations. The activities deciding it were not restricted to the front. Its consequences, not only its direct consequences, were daily felt in every home. In this respect it must be compared with organized civil war, which is bound to shake the relations of society wherever it is raging.

The Great War has affected the conceptions of government in three main directions. To make war on such a gigantic scale necessitated the enlistment of every able man and every able woman. They had to play their part in the huge machine which had to be constructed for the purpose of the annihilation of

the enemy. They had to give themselves to the commonwealths, their bodies as well as their souls. All their will power had to be directed in one direction. Such a task cannot be accomplished by any big nation through an appeal to cold reason. The imagination has to be kindled, and passion has to be aroused. This has been the work of the war propaganda organized in every country. In the cold dawn after the War, when the rising sun of reason is again sending its rays over the darkened land, that propaganda looks somewhat weird. It can be explained, though not justified, by the necessity of bringing about a passionate one-mindedness among the various nations, a one-mindedness which had to be based on a passionate faith in the moral superiority of one's own nation and in the moral degradation of the enemy. It has been done successfully in all countries. The citizens of all nations were swept into a maelstrom of blind hate. They soon learned to combine a fervid belief in their own nation's claim to a superior civilization with the not less passionate conviction that the social and political systems they had been accustomed to were the systems chosen by Providence for the salvation of man. Apart from a few conscientious objectors persecuted in all countries, who were not willing to give up the exercise of private judgment according to the right of reason, a right man had dearly bought in the days of the Reformation, everybody was willing to merge individual reason and individual conscience in that crowd feeling which looked to victory as the crowning triumph not only of one's own nation's cause but of the destiny of mankind. The age of reason had gone indeed. For the time be-

ing a reign of passion and perfervid creed had taken its place.

With it had gone the system of government by conference. In most countries the existence of parliamentary institutions was not interfered with. In fact, their possible weight had become enormous, as they could have paralyzed the government everywhere by their hold on the strings of the purse. But their working gradually changed. War is action, not debate. In all countries the power to act was delegated to a few men. Though these men were in theory politically responsible to parliament, in countries where there was full parliamentary government, in practice they were given a free hand indeed. During some of the most critical periods the Prime Ministers of England, France, or Italy, and the President of the United States probably wielded more power, and more unfettered power, than Alexander or Caesar did. It is even doubtful whether these "delegated dictatorial powers" in the western countries were not greater than those remaining in the hands of the rulers of the more autocratic states, like Russia and Germany, where the two strongly organized bureaucracies—the military bureaucracy as organized in the Supreme Command, and the civil servant bureaucracy, as organized in the political government—were apt to clash with each other. Neither could claim superiority, and the Emperor rarely succeeded in bringing about a proper adjustment.

The "dictatorship" existing during the War was not a mere military institution. That would not have been remarkable. After all, successful military operations have always depended on untrammeled decisions and unquestioning obedience. There have been

wars in days gone by which were directed by "discussion." Many a campaign of the old Austrian Empire was fraught with disaster, because there sat in Vienna an aulic council, composed of extremely wise men, who decided after lengthy debates, probably with excellent arguments, how the War was to be carried on, on a far-off battlefield, by a general who might have known what he had to do, but who was not allowed to snatch victory from the enemy ere he had convinced his masters how it ought to be done. Experience has shown that the essence of war is action, decision, and that the demands of quick decision make lengthy debates quite impossible. Thus the generals were allowed to act free of bureaucratic control and the statesmen were not hampered by parliaments.

It was, however, not merely the temporary release of leading statesmen from parliamentary control which characterized the Great War. This being a war not only of men but of materials and machinery the economic life of nations had to be organized on a centralistic, non-competitive basis, controllers of food and war material cropping up everywhere. Amongst the Allies, where supplies were fairly elastic, the system of control was persuasive rather than coercive. Amongst the Central Powers, who suffered from a scarcity of food and material such as nobody can realize who has not witnessed it personally, a kind of "economic dictatorship" was evolved. It was rather a "multiple dictatorship," in so far as no single authority controlled everything. The economic life of the nation was split up into compartments, considered watertight in many instances. Each section was presided over by an individual or a board who

were responsible to their consciences only, but not to the laws of political economy. For once the ideal of collectivistic socialism, the centralized organization of production and distribution, and of a bureaucracy greedy for an extension of their powers were merged into one. Not only the soldiers on the front and on the base had to obey without questioning the orders of their chiefs; for once the supreme ideal of government on autocratic lines, government by blind obedience, held sway in civil life. Some dictator in some government office wielded his wand, and at his behest the manager of a mill, the miners in a pit, the farmer on the land, the consumer standing queue, had to fall into line. They had to wait for the magic word of command, spoken by a controller of vegetables or of iron ores, who behaved like a Napoleon of accountancy, before production and distribution were allowed to start. It is true, people were not very well fed and supplies were not forthcoming in the quantities needed. But that, perhaps, was at least as much the fault of the existing scarcity as of the system of distribution. The principle of economic subordination and of authoritative regulation of production and distribution spread in quite a marvelous way. From the foaming sea of blood and tears rushing over the foundations of civilization, Thomas Hobbes' omnipotent state "Leviathan" arose, more hideous than any imagination could have conceived it.

Curiously enough this system was greeted with joy by the suffering masses, as the very numerous groups in Central Europe who had always believed in collectivistic socialism saw in it a chance for the realization of their dreams. They knew, of course, that the

individual who acted as director of vegetables and who did not always provide people with the green food needed, had often failed to do his job, but they easily understood that he was bound to fail. When there are not enough potatoes to go around it does not matter very much which system of distribution is in use. No system can make everybody happy in such circumstances. Though they had some doubt about the successful working of their principles their faith in them was not shaken. They looked forward to a time when there would be peace and when the experience gained in war by a system of economic dictatorship would bear fruit, when it would be possible to control production and distribution by centralized dictatorial methods and to bring about the social millennium.

For four long years the people of all nations have been taught the gospel of violence. War is organized violence. It is violence carried out by orders from above. Though strict obedience is demanded towards those in authority, few limits are set to arbitrary action when dealing with the enemy. The rules governing the social relations of men in time of peace are practically set aside for the time being. War aims at the destruction of civil society, and as long as it is war it will always do so. It trains millions of men to disregard civil control and to acts of violence. War denies the principles on which our civilization is really based; it denies the sacredness of human life; it denies the inviolability of private property; it tears up treaties. It must do all these things for its real purpose is destruction. It trains millions of individuals for a reign of violence, though the smashing of the laws enforced by civilization is carried out

for the time being by order from the proper authorities.

Now this spirit of violence developed by a four years' uninterrupted practice cannot suddenly be transformed into one of gentleness when the word "disband" is spoken. The advent of peace was bound to loosen the grip of authority on the masses heretofore subject to its sway. It did not immediately soften their temper. In fact, when there is no longer a strong force to control it, it may well break and, leaping up like a flame, burn the house on the hearth of which it was kindled. The Russian Revolution and, to a much smaller degree, the German Revolution have borne this out.

The Great War was not, like other wars, a war of men, it was a war of material and machinery. The material and the machinery had to be made. The men who did it, the workingmen behind the front, held the fate of their nations within the hollow of their hands—their power to "strike" was no longer the power of causing more or less inconvenience to society; it meant the breaking up of the military machine on which the fate of one's country depended. Never before had organized workingmen played such a part in the state and never before had they been so self-conscious of their own importance to society. In fact, they had become more important in their own opinion than parliaments. Parliaments might vote revenue, but whether that revenue could be converted into the commodities needed at the front depended on the coöperation of labor, and the cooperation of labor alone. Labor became quite as essential to gaining victory as the army confronting the enemy; and labor knew it.

As long as the working class of any of the warring countries were confident of victory and convinced that this victory of their own cause would bring about the materialization of those ideals of the social, political and national organization of the commonwealth they held dear to their hearts, the War was bound to go on. When they lost their faith in victory to be achieved by the existing form of government, or when they came to the conclusion that the rulers of their state were striving after wrong ideals, a breakdown was bound to come.

This happened first in Russia. The absence of decisive victories, the failure to hold their own, the terrible waste of life, the inefficient administration at home shook the faith of the Russian people in a form of government which was unable to procure victory. They changed it through the February revolution. The new government continued the War. They went on sacrificing lives; they did not procure victory. They were the representatives of the intellectuals and of the small bourgeois class of Russia. They had no organized masses behind them, neither the peasants, who had to do the fighting, nor the workingmen, who had to do the fasting and who had to provide the armaments. Disappointed by this incapacity to win victory and this tenacity in continuing the War, the masses accepted the lead of the organized communistic workers of Russia. The communists were a small minority, but a self-conscious minority, who had believed in violence as the proper method of achieving their policy at least as early as the revolution of 1905. Another twelve years—four of them years of war—had certainly not diminished their class-consciousness and their trust in physical force. They did

not want to waste their physical strength in hurling their lives against the German lines with scant hope of success, and in killing the German soldiers across the border, whom they considered their brethren and, like themselves, the victims of the capitalistic system. They wanted peace between the nations and war among the classes. They were supported by masses of war-tired soldiers and farmers, who had but one desire—to see an end to the slaughter and to return to their fields.

The Bolshevists, who ruthlessly grasped the power, had always believed in violence. They had always advocated the right of a small, self-conscious social minority to win power by force of arms, to control the state, to force their will upon a reluctant majority by intimidation and the use of arms. They were believers in war at home; they were believers in peace abroad. They were a minority and they knew it. They did not feel bound by democratic principles to wait until they had grown into a majority and could carry out their reforms peacefully, by means of the vote. They had no faith in democracy, and they did not believe in Parliament. Parliaments to Lenin were assemblies of vicious chatterboxes; parliaments are venal and corrupt institutions. Representative institutions, as such, are merely a means of hoodwinking the people, who, for one single day only, the day on which they elect treacherous representatives, have a show of power.

Nor did Lenin believe in democracy. Democracy is a form of control of the state. The state is the government. Government is really founded on two institutions—the army and the bureaucracy. The army as well as the bureaucracy are exploiters of the people

in the existing state of society. They have been entrusted with certain functions in the interest of the community. They have learned to exercise them for their own private benefit. They must be wiped out and the people must be taught to do their own legislative and executive political work. It is better, no doubt, that everybody should have equal political right to exercise an equal influence on the constitutional government. But this chief feature of democracy is purely formal, for, as long as wealth is in the hands of a small class, the economic power of this class will always undermine the political power formal equality has given to the rest of the nation. The laboring class must try to get control of the state. They must arm themselves, destroy the professional army and take its place. They must do this by putting the military power in the hands of the working class. Having done so, they can rule and oust the bureaucracy. They need not wait till they get a majority. They need not waste time in getting votes. If they get the guns and take away those of their enemies, they possess the physical power needed for the transformation of society. And as they are the organized producers they have got the economic power as well. No strike, apart from a farmers' strike, can really hurt them. They can force the capitalists. They can break their will by shooting some of them, thus intimidating them; the others cannot retaliate by a strike. For a strike of those few capitalists whose functions are essential to the working of society can easily be broken by intimidation and by physical force. The War had provided the Russian proletariat with the weapons needed for the execution of their policy;

it gave them, moreover, leaders of sufficient ruthlessness to carry it out.

They evolved a system of government which had first been tried in the abortive revolution of 1905—the council system. The workingmen employed in one concern, or the soldiers in some locality, formed themselves into an electoral body, and selected a council from their ranks. This council, subject to the will of its electors, controlled the works or the municipality. From this haphazard organization, originally due to the actual need of the moment, a skeleton system of "government by councils" was drafted. The employees of the works on the one hand, the inhabitants of small districts, municipalities, etc., on the other hand, formed electoral bodies, choosing some members for a council. These *local councils,* whose electorate was composed of vocational and regional bodies, deputed some representatives to a provincial council. The provincial council, in its turn, sent delegates to the central council of all Russia, in which all political power was vested. The Soviet system, as it was called, was supposed to be a heaven-sent new system of government, emancipating the masses from the pressure of an absolute autocracy as well as from parliamentary bourgeois corruption.

What was new in it was the combination of *local units* and *vocational bodies,* organized locally as electoral bodies. It was supposed to be the antithesis of parliamentary government. In reality it was nothing of that sort. It was very much like a federation of New England townships, electing a central body from among their local representatives. It was different from other representative institutions in one respect and in one respect only: The vote was given

exclusively to a minority; only the workingmen and the poorer peasants were entitled to it; the intellectuals, the officials, the big farmers, the landowners and the manufacturers were excluded. This electoral system loudly proclaimed to all the world the advent of the "aristocracy of the proletariat," the superior nobility in mind and in social importance of the classes, who, up to now, had been considered the bottom of society. It was really an inversion of the old feudal principle, the serf assuming the privileges of his former master.

Apart from this it differed from other representative systems in minor points only: the term of election was very short, three months only, and the right of recall was established; the mandate was an imperative mandate. The executive was not separated from the legislative body: as each man had taken a gun and become a soldier of the Soviet republic, so everyone might become a delegate, and each representative was expected to carry out in turn some of the executive functions which in other regimes are entrusted to a bureaucracy. The hatred of the Russian people against that bureaucracy which had trodden them down for many years was so great that they would not continue it, even after they could have controlled it.

The so-called Soviet system is really merely a system of loosely federated local councils, elected on a minority franchise, sending representatives to higher councils, all representatives having an imperative mandate and being subject to recall. It was a system quite well adapted to a country like Russia, where there are huge distances which only a very energetic central government can overcome, and where there

was everywhere but a small minority of class-conscious workingmen, willing to fight for their class interests. What was remarkable in Russia was the ruthlessness of men like Lenin, Trotsky and others, who succeeded in their policy regardless of sacrifice. And they succeeded in something else. They succeeded in throwing a spell, a kind of glamour, over that system of councils that made it appear to be the emblem of the coming liberty to the suffering masses, to the people groaning under oppression all over the world.

That became clearly visible in the great struggle of clashing political systems which followed the German Revolution. This revolution was accomplished as a working-class revolution, though it had started as a revolt of war-tired sailors and soldiers. They gained a political object when the masses, organized in the socialistic parties, proclaimed the general strike on November 9, 1918, and brought about the eclipse of the German monarchies. The old constitution broke down completely. The Russian example fired the imagination of the masses, as it did in Austria and later on in Italy. The real power was in the hands of the soldiers, who formed soldiers' councils, and of the workingmen, who formed workingmen's councils. A violent agitation spread all over Germany to perpetuate this state of affairs and to build up a new commonwealth on the Russian principle. A small group, the Spartacus Union, led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg, stood out for these ideas. They were communists in principle, but, what was much more important than the aim they stood for, were the methods they advocated; they were believers in the Russian council system. They were

never tired of advocating its introduction. All over Germany soldiers' councils and workingmen's councils had been formed. They did good service in maintaining order locally, for in those days just after the Armistice, when the disbanded army was returning, it was very hard to stem the process of dissolution which seemed imminent. The local councils of soldiers and mostly of socialistic workingmen supported the existing municipal authorities and maintained a kind of order.

The workingmen's and soldiers' councils elected, in true Russian fashion, a General Central Council which was to rule Germany. But it did nothing of that sort. For immediately after the revolution the two socialistic parties had met and appointed from their ranks six commissioners who were to rule Germany until elections for a constituent assembly could be held, which was to give Germany a republican constitution. The Central Council of soldiers and workingmen approved the six commissioners. It occasionally tried to control them. Broadly speaking, from November, 1918, until January, 1919, Germany was a Soviet republic, but the six commissioners, supported by the organized socialistic parties and the common sense of the German people, ruled Germany. The majority of the commissioners took their stand on the principles of democracy. They looked upon themselves only as a kind of trustees, provisionally ruling the country until it could get a constitution. They wanted it to have a democratic constitution. But the Soviet party in Germany, that small group gathered around Liebknecht and Luxembourg, did not want the parliamentary system. They did not want democracy. They wanted, as they were never

tired of saying, all power for the soldiers' and workingmen's councils. They advocated the introduction of the Russian system into Germany. They were a very small minority, and they knew that they were a small minority. But they believed in the right of the minority to impress its will on the majority provided it was strong enough to do so. They appealed to force. They incited the masses to violence. They compelled the government to organize military forces, which in due time were led against them, not always in open battle. On the 16th of January, 1919, Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg were foully murdered by some soldiers and officers. It was a dastardly deed, a deed which the victims themselves could not have censured; for they had appealed to the sword, and by the sword they perished.

The commissioners and the parties striving for democracy naturally were held up to universal contempt by the advocates of a system of physical force, intimidation and terror. Like their Russian teachers, Liebknecht and the people around him had been pacifists abroad and terrorists at home. They believed in peace among nations, and they practiced war against classes. They have been loudly praised for their pacifistic attitude by Western admirers. That praise continued long after they had turned the sword against their own countrymen. For a long time the same people in the Western democracies who preached crusades against Russian Bolshevism threw all their moral influence into the scales in favor of those German Bolshevists who tried to prevent the rise of a German democracy.

The collapse of the old order of things by the November revolution had been effected with very

little loss of life. In later days many a German republican has asked himself the question whether the generosity exhibited towards the supporters of the old regime had really not gone too far. It certainly made future efforts for a counter revolution fairly easy. Notwithstanding these tribulations, it was a great moral achievement to bring about the eclipse of an old social and political system with very little loss of life. After the internecine fight between Bolshevism as a political system and German democracy had begun, things changed greatly in that respect. Thousands and thousands lost their lives in that struggle.

When that struggle was over and when victory was won, safety for the democratic system in Western Europe had been secured for the time being. It was entirely due to the German working class. Without the fight put up by the organized German Socialist movement and the German trade unionists, Bolshevism would have gained the day in those dreary winter months. The German working class, and the working class alone, in those days saved Europe from Bolshevism. They received little assistance from the bourgeois classes—they had none to give at that time—and the only support they got from abroad was a continuation of the blockade.

In that dreadful winter, while privation and starvation, such as nobody can realize who has not been through it, were reigning everywhere, Bolshevism and the council system were defeated in Germany. The Bolshevists gained some temporary successes in Bavaria and in Hungary, both countries where the organized working class has never been very strong. But, broadly speaking, in the spring of 1919 the de-

feat of the council system was decided in Germany, where so many of Europe's great decisions have taken place in days gone by—for, after all, Germany has almost always been the battlefield of the Continent.

But the defeat was not complete. Three issues arose fraught with grave consequences later on. The newly created German democracy, attacked by militant Bolshevism, had to organize a new army to suppress physical force. In doing so it had to rely on the service of trained officers, many of them in sympathy with the old order of things.

The creed of violence, once introduced into domestic strife, did not disappear when the originators of the strife were defeated. Violence had been advocated and applied; violence had been counteracted with violence. The principle of violence as a legitimate method of settling conflicts of opinion and interest within a nation played henceforth an important part in the affairs of European countries. Whether they were civic bands organized in Bavaria, or Fascist bands organized in Italy, or Red armies organized somewhere else, the legitimacy of internal warfare had become an accepted principle.

Last, not least, the glamour of the council system, so-called, as a system of political institutions, very different from any other system devised so far, did not completely disappear when the Russian onslaught failed in Germany. In the political development of the days to come, organized violence and the belief—a mystical belief, a quasi religious faith, in that new institution called "councils" where people deliberated with a wisdom totally absent in parliaments,

a belief that this new institution would bring about the millennium—this belief played a part in the next phase of events.

IV

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE STATE

When the socialists in Central Europe grasped the reins of power, the most highly centralized machine of government ever organized by man was in their hands. They had always believed in collectivism; they had now, it seemed, the political power to carry out their ideals. They had at their disposal a government machine perfected by control work during the War. At this moment, when all the world expected the dawn of a new era of state organized collectivism, that government machine, so carefully constructed and perfected by the old regime during its long term of power, and, as it seemed, greatly improved by developments during the War, broke down completely.

To begin with, the strain of the War had been too great for it. Government and government administration had been expected to solve problems of production and distribution which by their very nature had proved insoluble. The administrative machine continued to work, but everybody knew that there was no turnout. The faith in the superstate, in which bureaucrats and collectivists had shared, was shattered just at the moment when the collectivists got hold of the state. Moreover, production was at a low ebb. If the nations were going to live, it had to be increased, and it could be increased only by giving free play to the individualistic forces of business enterprise. If the commonwealth was to survive the crisis its new rulers must resign themselves, at least

temporarily, not to exercise that power they had just acquired. They needed the help of the leaders of business, whose political position had, it seemed, gone forever in the days of the revolution—for they after all had been the chief beneficiaries of the system of individualistic capitalism. Thus, the classes whom the revolution had meant to wipe out ultimately became the main prop of the social fabric, for without their initiative life could not go on. They were quite willing to carry on business in so far as their private interests coincided with the necessities of the organized commonwealth. But they did their best to make the new order politically innocuous.

The bulk of the German Socialists consisted of extremely moderate men. They had fought Bolshevism successfully and they would not think of expropriation without compensation. They saw the need of private initiative, but it was impossible for them in the state of public feeling existing at the time to allow the continuation of large private monopolies. They knew that in industry the age of blind obedience was over, that the workmen desired a kind of control, and aspired to a kind of copartnership. Increased production could not be safeguarded if industry was carried on on the old autocratic principle. The safest way to bring about the results desired seemed to them the nationalization of monopolistic industries.

The newly formed coalition government in Germany—for, partly on account of the conflict between the two socialist parties the Socialists had failed to get the majority at the elections in January, 1919—appointed two commissions to report on the nationalization of monopolistic industry, especially mining. These commissions have produced some extremely

interesting reports. They were followed by rather mild legislation, for, though Socialism was very strong, it had to face an extremely powerful individualistic opposition. As a very large part of Germany is being held by well-to-do peasant proprietors, the nationalization of the land was out of the question. The owners of property of all sorts realized that well enough, but they realized, too, that of necessity there would be a growth of the working class, that their internal differences might be got over, and that the propertied classes, though supported by the peasants, might by and by be reduced to the state of a minority. They could not hope to safeguard their privileged position by a privileged vote, such as they had enjoyed in days gone past. The onslaught of Bolshevism had been defeated only by an appeal to democracy. That democracy could not be induced to sacrifice the principle for which the workingmen had been ready to shed the blood of their fellows. The way chosen by the Hungarian oligarchy after the defeat of Bolshevism by the Rumanians, was, fortunately, closed to Germany.

This being so, anxiety for the future was very real in many parts of Germany, and in Austria too, notwithstanding the moderation of the Socialists. The great cities and the industrial areas were the unapproachable strongholds of the working class, which, in the long run, was bound to achieve its collectivistic aims. There was no possibility, it seemed, of avoiding that fate as long as they dominated a centralized, united commonwealth. But there was a chance, perhaps, of splitting up this commonwealth in its congruent parts.

During the last fifty years and especially during

the War, centralization had greatly advanced in Germany. The unification of the financial system, and the taking over of the state railways by the German Republic, had been the last steps in that direction. There had been a great outcry against that centralization, for state sentiment and regional feeling had always been very strong in Germany. It seemed, however, as if the necessity for economic reconstruction would sweep away all obstacles to unity. The Socialists undoubtedly were the chief supporters of this movement. They formed huge majorities in certain parts of the German Republic; these blocks of votes would give them a controlling influence in a unified commonwealth. But if the Republic were divided into several states, as it had been before, large areas would remain completely controlled by non-socialistic elements. That held true especially of Bavaria, but quite as much of many other more or less agricultural districts.

It was but natural that, very early after the revolution, the enemies of Socialism became greatly interested in problems of federation and devolution. In the olden days, the manufacturers, dependent on a unified market, had been the driving force of the German Unionist movement. They were frightened of the vagaries of local parliaments, controlled by the agricultural interests. They were not only interested in uniform labor legislation, but quite as much in guarantees against the unequal taxation of industry. A local agrarian majority might unjustly tax them and unwisely tamper with custom tariffs and railway rates, but it would in any case respect the rights of private property. Since the strong central government of the olden days had gone, and since the

power seemed to have passed into the hands of the labor class, their attitude changed. All sorts of schemes for the formation of separate states within the boundary of the Republic, but free from its control in all matters dealing with property and production, were eagerly discussed. In these separate states, it was hoped, the masters of industry could keep control in their own hands by an alliance with landowners and peasant farmers. In the early days of the revolution, when Bolshevism seemed rife, there was even a strong movement for separation from the Republic in the occupied areas, where the armies of occupation could be expected to ward off Bolshevism, and where the existing system of capitalism might be expected to go on in their rear. With the collapse of Bolshevism, this inducement for separation disappeared. All efforts of the French generals to revive it failed, for, though regional feeling has always been very strong in Germany, even those populations most opposed to centralization quickly realized that an army of occupation is not a pleasant instrument for weaning the people on whom they are quartered from their old allegiance. But it must be gratefully acknowledged that the generals commanding the French army on the Rhine have contributed greatly to the unity of the German people.

Though the policy of splitting the German Republic into independent or quasi independent states was thus early doomed to failure, efforts to divide it for economic purposes into "economic provinces" or districts, with self-government in economic questions continued for a long time. The problems of economic administration were to be taken from the hands of the central government which was controlled by So-

cialists, and to be put into the hands of regional authorities which the propertied and land classes could hope to control.

There was nothing very startling in this. Even a highly centralized country like France has a "regionalist movement" strongly influenced by economic motives. Wherever there have been discordant social systems within a united commonwealth some kind or other of local economic autonomy has been tried, to avoid political separation. Mason and Dixon's Line created but an inner frontier behind which an energetic and aggressive minority could maintain their separate social and economic system within the boundaries of the United States.

There was a chance that these movements might be successful. The political power had indeed passed for the time being into the hands of the working class. But the economic power of the owners of land and the employers of labor had been greatly increased during the War. While the investment holders and the intelligentia, whose natural leanings had always been unionist, had been greatly injured and in many cases completely squeezed out by the social revolution following in the wake of inflation, capitalism as a system of owning land and industries had flourished exceedingly. While the death knell of the capitalistic system seemed to ring all over Europe, business people were becoming exceedingly rich and powerful. As their services were essential for the reconstruction of Europe they began to consider themselves the nation's backbone. They were willing to shoulder the responsibilities of economic reconstruction. But they feared that business was not safe in a socialistic commonwealth, of which they formed but a small mi-

nority. They could not return to the old class franchise which had existed in Prussia before the War. They could, as they quickly saw, not hope to find safety in separation, for that would have meant French domination, and, though some of them occasionally played with such ideas, they never meant to betray their country. And they were not strong enough to force the scheme of economic provinces upon the country, as public opinion realized the complete dependence into which the poorer provinces were bound to fall if the more favored areas had complete economic autonomy. Nor could they safeguard their interests by the institution of a class vote. So they had to look out for other means of protection. Their attitude towards the state changed. In days gone by they had been the advocates of strong government, for it was a government which protected their interests. The old state had been *their* state. They occasionally fought its encroachments on the spheres of private business life; but they had always supported its authority. The new state was in the hands of the working class, which many of them had never been willing to consider their equals. Now they had become their superiors. This being so, the state was no longer a friendly power, entitled to one's support. It had become an enemy, rather, who had to be carefully watched.

This was originally an economic rather than a political movement. If the state was in the hands of a class on whose sympathetic understanding one could not rely, one might deprive it of most of its functions, either by devolution or, preferably, by cutting them off completely. Quite naturally the trend of development took the latter line. The machinery of

government had been greatly weakened by the strain of war. The state of the finances was extremely bad. The scope for action of the government was greatly restricted. The Treaty of Peace had practically split up the sovereignty of Germany and placed it in the hands of the Rhineland Commission, the Reparations Commission, the Ambassadors' Conference in Paris and the League of Nations. The German government were allowed an outward show of independent power; they were not allowed to have a policy of their own. A large part of Germany was subject to the rule of foreign commissions; in the remaining parts the orders of the German government could be carried out only if they were not in conflict with some of the 428 paragraphs of the Treaty of Peace. The government in many cases was nothing but an executive, carrying out laws passed elsewhere, but forced to shoulder the responsibility for their execution. They were humiliated wherever there was a chance to humiliate them. It had become the settled policy of some of Germany's sister republics to treat her government as the bad boy of Europe.

The services of such a government, weak at home and abroad, could easily be dispensed with by big business. The War and its sequels had on the one hand greatly increased the importance of the working class; it had on the other hand added enormously to the power and the wealth of the big concerns. The services of the government, it was suggested, could be reduced to almost nothing, if an agreement between organized workingmen and employers were reached. A new creed of Cobdenism arose, aiming at a great restriction of the sphere of government action. Government was at its best a costly, superfluous

luxury in which a poor country could scarcely indulge; at its worst a positive nuisance, for it was controlled by the opponents of business—the socialistic working class. Business could do very well without government. In fact, government needed business far more than the business people needed government.

For some time a theory of non-intervention in the sphere of economics was advocated as it had never been advocated before. A new Manchester school arose, demanding complete self-government for industry. All outstanding economic issues were to be settled by agreement between the employers and the employees concerned, without the intervention of government. This was called "self-government." Its functions were not restricted to the adjustment of claims between employers and employees. The advocates of that sort of self-government wanted to draw all economic problems, including taxation and reparation questions, into their sphere of action. They completely overlooked the fact that self-government as a system of good government is possible only where the actions of this government do not affect the interests of the unrepresented outsider. Wages agreements between employers and employees are not simple acts of self-government, for they must ultimately influence prices, and prices have to be paid by the consumer who is not represented or not sufficiently represented in the self-governing bodies aimed at. For the new Cobdenism, as advocated by the employers of labor, took no heed of the consumer. It dealt with producers only. It assumed that the working class as producers of various kinds of goods would be swayed by their own interest in high wages, just as the employers were attracted by high prices.

They might go on dreaming socialistic dreams, but they would act as people having common interests with their employers. The employers were willing to egg them on in that direction. When the coal miners of Westphalia asked for a moderate increase in their wages they advised them to raise their demands. For to them an advance of wages meant an advance of prices which the public and not the owners were bound to pay. This new Cobdenism did not believe in a system of free competition. It aimed at the consolidation of monopoly.

The theory of doing away with the state was not restricted to the sphere of economics. It was practically applied in many directions. The Treaty of Peace imposed upon Germany the delivery of coal and coke, of dye-stuffs, ships and all sorts of materials. The government did not own these commodities. It had to get them from mine owners and manufacturers. The coöperation of private producers thus became essential to the execution of the terms of the peace. This gave private business people a share in international negotiations such as they never had had before; they were no longer mere advisors. They had become the chief actors, for they, and not their government, were the chief factors on whom delivery depended. They thus gained a place on the international stage, and considered themselves entitled to have their say. They wanted to make arrangements binding their governments, but they themselves did not feel bound to the agreements concluded by the representatives of their country. In many cases they tried to act independently of the government; they sometimes tried to overrule its settled policy. Foreign affairs, which had always

been considered the chief domain of government, were encroached upon by big employers, and in many cases by organizations of the working class, who thought that their connection with the working class of other countries gave them greater chances in international negotiations than those enjoyed by the old-fashioned foreign offices of the countries concerned.

The encroachment of private interest on public functions was not restricted to interference in foreign affairs. In the days of anarchy following the revolution, battalions composed of workingmen had maintained order in Austria. In Germany, when the Red Terror was imminent, bands of volunteers were recruited by enterprising officers, who put their swords but not their hearts at the disposal of the menaced republic. The money needed for these formations was furnished by the capitalists, especially the manufacturers whose interests were, of course, at stake. In one case they went so far as to finance an expedition abroad—the organization of a corps of German volunteers for the defense of the Baltic provinces, which was supposed to save Western Europe from the inroads of Bolshevism.

When, after the passing of the German constitution, the government had succeeded in bringing about a certain amount of order, having got control of the police and of an organized army, there really was no need for the continuation of these extra governmental activities, but for the fact that a considerable section of landowners and industrial employers distrusted the new government and the new state. They were sure that a government, controlled by Socialists, would encroach upon their interests some day.

They considered the action which this government had taken in dealing with the reparation problem weak and unpatriotic. They felt degraded by the many humiliations that government had submitted to and considered themselves menaced in some of their vital interests by such concessions as it had made.

After every war a large number of people are not inclined to go back to their former occupations. This common experience was, of course, borne out by the Great War, a war of unusual intensity and of long duration. A large number of young men had gone straight from the school to the battlefield. The older ones had forgotten the ways of peace, the younger ones had never known civil life. In compliance with the terms of peace the old army organization had to be destroyed. Many soldiers, trained for the military profession and for nothing but the army, were out of employment. They and their class had been the masters of the old state. Power had gone from their hands. They saw their country, for which they had been willing to lay down their lives, abused and ill-treated by foreign nations. They saw it ruled by a class of people they habitually considered as inferiors. They had to stand aside without regular employment, and see the old social fabric going to pieces. They did not know much about social theories, but they were rather inclined to sympathize with the propertied classes, and to share their fear of a future confiscation of property. They heartily disliked the government of internationalists, who had proclaimed the gospel that "Right is Might." They themselves believed in Nationalism, but their power was broken (as many of them thought by an armistice forced upon them by treachery), for the democratic

powers of the West had dictated a humiliating peace at the point of the bayonet. Did that not show clearly enough that the theory of Right is Might was a kind of dope, weakening a nation's resistance, but not a political system in which any sane person believed? The behavior of the Allied powers showed the soundness of their old doctrine clearly enough to the class who believed in the doctrine "Might is Right." They had been mistaken only in so far as they had not had enough Might to impose their creed on their adversaries. The revolution, in their eyes, had betrayed the country. It had, moreover, displaced them from their own position of social power. Their country would never be right again, until they seized that power and put an end to that policy which had made it a slave of other nations. This feeling had become widespread in Germany since the Peace of Versailles had been signed, and had disappointed the hope of the democratic parties.

These militant nationalists knew little and cared less about abstract social theories, but their sympathies were, of course, with the propertied classes, whose fear and hatred of socialists they shared. These nationalists became very popular with all those groups of small capitalists and with the bulk of the intellectuals whom inflation had despoiled, financially, after the revolution had deprived them of their old established influence. It was easy enough in these circumstances to get volunteers whenever there was the menace of a Red rising. And it was quite natural that, even after the Red danger had passed, voluntary military organizations continued in a country which was scarcely allowed to have an army, which had been deprived of its colonies, which was

not allowed military training, and which had no outlet for the wilder instincts of its young men. These organizations were illegal under the Treaty of Peace of Versailles. The Allied governments forced the German government to suppress them. After a hard struggle, especially with Bavaria, the government succeeded in doing so, at least formally. For it was but in the nature of things that they transformed themselves into secret societies. Being secret, or semi-secret, they assumed many new features. They were no longer under the direct control of the government, nay, they were not even bound to that government. Some remained mere emergency organizations, created as a protection against a Red rising. Others aimed at the subversion of the central government, which they held responsible for Germany's weak foreign policy and for the social degradation their members had suffered. Others, again, looked upon themselves as a nucleus of a national army, which would free the country from the foreign yoke. All of them believed in violence and in the principle that force is a remedy. Others considered themselves as the bodyguard of vested interests against rapacious Socialists. Some looked upon themselves as upon the guardians of civil order, others again posed as the advance guard of the coming war of liberation, and the pioneers of a new, though hazy social system, in which all the hideous features of capitalism were to disappear, while capitalism itself flourished. They had no difficulty in getting arms. The disbanding of the army had littered the country with war materials. They were soon sufficiently well equipped to frighten a weak government at home; they were never in a position to take the field against an enemy. As long as

the period of inflation had lasted they had been liberally financed by certain vested interests who wanted protection either against a Red rising or against the vagaries of a socialistic government.

There was nothing surprising in that; nothing due to some special feature of the German character. In the past similar forces had been at work in the United States after the Civil War; after the Great War they could be traced in nearly all European countries. For in Italy the rise of Fascism was due to the same feeling of outraged nationality (in her case the outrage was committed by the Italian syndicalists), to the contempt for a weak foreign policy as shown in the case of Fiume, and to the fear of the well-to-do classes that the masses might rule the state and confiscate their property.

In Central Europe the classes who disassociated themselves from the state were the classes who had formerly ruled it. A similar movement started in other countries with the working class. In Italy, for example, the old state went on ruling through the ordinary forms of parliamentary democracy. The working classes, represented by the socialistic parties, played numerically a great part in that parliament; their practical influence was rather small for they were torn by violent dissensions. Their radical wing, deeply impressed by Russian examples, decried parliament and the state. The existing state was not their state. They did not feel bound to render it allegiance. They felt strong enough to stand aside, to decry and to ignore the state and to rule society as a self-conscious minority by acts of economic violence. They seized many a big estate; they set themselves to control municipalities and provinces,

breaking up Italy into local units and trying to spread a kind of Soviet rule all over the country. In August and September, 1920, they occupied the factories and kept them in their hands during sixty days. The central government continued to exist, satisfied for the time being with looking on. They denied not only the state; they denied the nation. They felt class-conscious, and class-conscious only. Their brethren were not these Italian people belonging to different walks of life. Their nation was the international proletariat, the working class of the entire world, or at least that section of the working class who agreed with them. In their view the different nations of the earth were to be broken into two sections, and the sections representing the radical working class were to form the commonwealths of the international proletariat.

Thus the state and even the nation were denied in many parts of the world. In those countries where the government had passed into the hands of the working class, imbued, or supposed to be imbued, with the spirit of internationalism, the attacks on the government and on the state were carried out by the classes who had been deposed and who, rightly or wrongly, considered themselves the true exponents of the national ideal. They were sometimes quite willing to enlist foreign help for the conquest of that power from which they had been ousted—as did the Russian emigrants in Western Europe, or, to a lesser degree, the old ascendancy party in Hungary. The Russian enterprises failed, for the Bolsheviks succeeded in becoming the national government, by defending the national territory against its former rulers who invaded it, supported by the international bourgeoisie. Their Hungarian imitators failed to stop the Ru-

manian invasion, in the wake of which the deposed classes of Hungary came back into their own. Revolutionaries and counter revolutionaries turned, one after the other, against the state, basing their actions on the theory of violence and denying democracy, willing, if need be, to set up an independent power besides the state. In that respect the creeds of Bolshevism and Fascism are almost identical.

V

VOCATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

THE most difficult question an advocate of democratic government has to face is the question of how to safeguard the rights of parliamentary minorities. Aggressive minorities like the Bolsheviks have made it very easy for themselves to dispose of that problem by assuming that the minority, provided it is the right sort of minority, need not worry about what a majority does or does not do; it merely forces its own will upon that majority. Though these extravagant claims can be discarded, the problem of the proper treatment of minorities remains.

Minority problems frequently may be considered a passing phase. A minority may be converted into a majority. In some cases the missionary activity of a small minority will gain them adherents in ever growing numbers, until the believers in the old popular faith, which the minority tried to undermine by argument, are easily outnumbered, or the same result may be achieved almost automatically by a growth in population owing to immigration or to a higher birth rate or merely by a change in the industrial structure of society. In these cases the problem of the original minority is merely temporary, as far as this original group is concerned. But the problem itself is not solved. It is merely shifted from one group to another. And the recollection of having been during a long time a minority subject to the mercy of a majority unfortunately rarely contributes to fair dealing and justice in regard to the newly created

minority. The racial minorities in Central Europe, formerly subject to the sway of Germans, Austrians and Hungarians, had some just cause of complaint against their masters. They have not learned wisdom in the days of their Babylonian captivity. And the world at large is certainly not improved when a racial minority industrially rather backward and suffering from the rule of a progressive majority is converted by territorial gerrymandering into a majority quite as backward as it was before, but politically strong enough to force its cultural ideals upon a progressive minority. The Germans forcing the Tchechs to learn German before the War may have been quite as wrong as the Tchechs are now when they are compelling the Germans to use their mother-tongue, but there is one difference indeed. The former forced the latter to become partners, unwilling partners indeed, in one of the civilizations accepted as great by the entire world; the latter are cutting them off from the world at large and are forcing them to participate in a cultural system which has little chance of ever being anything but local.

Permanent minorities whose interests have to be safeguarded have been of different kinds. There have been religious minorities, territorial (regional) minorities, racial minorities and social (economic) minorities. Wherever these minorities have been considered permanent with no chance of growing into majorities their interests have been defended by one or the other of the following methods:

Majorities and minorities can agree to withdraw the subjects they are interested in from the sphere of government. In that way, for example, many progressive states have settled the struggle between reli-

gious denominations for the control of government as an agent for regulating religious and educational systems. They have withdrawn church affairs from the interference of any public authority and have made it the private concern of the group interested in them. In most cases genuine religious life has flourished exceedingly whenever it was freed from state control.

In other cases a majority has renounced power in favor of the minority, by delegating to it autonomous localized self-government. This regional division of sovereign power obviously can be applied only where some sort of territorial segregation is possible.

Unfortunately, we cannot assume that majorities are never arrogant or ignorant but willing to set themselves limits to the exercises of their powers. The solutions applied so far have been but partial solutions. It is possible, no doubt, in an enlightened community to settle the political strife between religious bodies by making it a general rule that religion is the private concern of the different communities implicated. But it is impossible to settle the struggle between the advocates and the opponents of the institution of private property by leaving the legal regulation of that principle either jointly or separately to the owners of property or to those who want to oust them. It is not difficult to give self-government to the members of a racial community, living in a distinct region which can easily be cut off from other regions. But it is impossible to do so where individuals or groups of individuals of alien origin are scattered all over the country, unwilling or unable to undergo a process of segregation. And it is clearly out of question to propose a joint national commer-

cial policy and to grant at the same time the right of making special tariffs to every important area or state included in that commonwealth. There is a problem, and there remains a problem, notwithstanding all efforts at solution.

It is not a problem created by democracy, it affects all forms of government, but it is a problem difficult to solve on democratic lines, a problem which has often endangered the working of democratic institutions. A minority, considering themselves a conscious unit, has often been unwilling to bow to the will of the majority. They have often enough threatened to break up the union by which they were bound: they have been willing to appeal to the sword and that has been the end of government by conference. There is no need to go back to the period leading to the Civil War in the United States; the history of Ulster from 1912 to 1924 is clearly a case to the point.

To prevent such dangers the principle of over-representation of minorities has been introduced in many constitutions with the object of soothing their susceptibilities. This has taken many forms. Sometimes certain groups are over-represented by making a territorial unit, not the number of people inhabiting it, the basis of representation. This was the case of the old unreformed House of Commons and is to-day the case in many American states. Or power may be split between two houses, one of them composed like the American Senate on the principle of equal representation of units rather than of that of individual people. In other cases again certain fundamental rights are guaranteed to minorities in the constitution. Laws violating them are illegal. A tribunal like the Supreme Court of the United States is set up to

test their legality and to invalidate them when unconstitutional. These rights can be taken away only by a cumbersome constitutional change which for all practical purposes has been found sufficient to give them protection. An illustration is the constitution of the League of Nations, which practically makes all important changes depend on a unanimous vote. By carefully protecting minority members against being overruled by a majority, any move of real importance is practically blocked.

The revolution in Central Europe which brought the Socialists to the top pushed the problem of the permanent social minorities into the foreground. Deep down in the hearts of the continental nations there has always been a strong antipathy to the theory of the equality of all men. It had been voiced by Edmund Burke's eloquent speeches against the French Revolution. Later on it had found brilliant expression in the writings of Frenchmen like de Maistre and Bonald, during the period of restoration. It had come back like an echo from the romantic writers of Germany, when they were engaged in fighting the advent of modern democracy. All men no doubt were essential to the well-being of the commonwealth, but the functions of different men were different. All men might be represented in the nation's councils, but they ought to be represented according to the importance of the functions they had to fulfill within the state. It was not fair, nor wise, nor just to grant equal rights for unequal services.

Now the era of mere political revolutions was over. All men had become politically free. Man's chief task in modern society was mainly economic. The chief rôle he had to play within the commonwealth was to

produce goods and to render services to his fellow men. To be a producer was the most elementary function men and women had to carry out. In days gone by, the different classes of producers had been formed into vocational associations, in guilds and corporations. These guilds and corporations stood for vocational interests, but more than that they had often run the state. Was it not possible to return to the vocational ideals of the Middle Ages, and to base a new representative system on solid national conceptions not perverted by the Jacobine inheritance from the French Revolution or from the puritan tradition of Anglo-American democracy? As experience had shown, parliaments elected on a democratic basis gave preponderance to lawyers and talkers who had "the gift of gab," but who were not truly representative of production and vocational interests. They might perhaps properly represent the consumer. But nowadays the mere consumer was of slight importance. Production was everything. The output of material goods was far more essential to the general welfare than the production of general ideas and arguments. The interests of the manufacturing groups and the interests of the working class as producers and the vague speculations of the literary romanticists all tended in the same direction.

These currents of public opinion were by no means exclusively German. "The Return to the General Estates" was an interesting battle cry raised in France,[1] and even England was not free from it. Eco-

[1] Georges Valois, *Le Retour aux États Généraux:* "One part of France is in eclipse. This is the Stratum composed of the Politicians and Parasites. And the true eternal France is reappearing: That is the France of the Soldiers and Producers." p. 315.

nomic legislation had become the most important part of all legislation. It was far better, it seemed, to hand it over to the parties directly concerned with it, to employers and employees, to consumers' and producers' organizations, than to let it be handled by a parliament, elected on purely political issues by people who of necessity were dilettantes. As far as Fascism has not been content to advocate a method of action and to utter nationalist sentiments the scheme of social reconstruction it has tried to evolve is a hierarchically organized vocational commonwealth.

Like other movements of the last few years, the problem assumed its most acute shape in Germany. The leaders of German business life had realized after the revolution that they did not fare badly when directly engaged in negotiations with their workmen. Before the War they had preferred an autocratic method to any system of industrial self-government. After the revolution they had quickly adapted their methods to the changed situation. They adopted the principle of collective bargaining *in toto*. They quickly discerned that, by negotiating with groups of workers on a basis of equality, they succeeded in settling many grave disputes without much friction. They saw plainly enough that their workingmen as members of their unions, were mainly interested in *wages*. That was rather an easy attitude to deal with; while the same people as members of the Socialist party were rather dangerous theorists. They themselves were mainly interested in *prices*. As many of them enjoyed a monopolistic position due to the War and to the working of inflation, any rise of wages could always be made good by a corresponding rise of prices. True, the workingmen had to pay most of that

rise through an increased cost of living, but as they were often short-sighted it was not difficult to deal with them. These negotiations on a purely business basis were far more pleasant than negotiations with the representatives of the same workingmen in parliament, where they acted as advocates of socialistic ideas.

An endeavor was made to get over these difficulties by proclaiming loudly that all economic questions were "business questions," and that business had no use for politics. Such a theory might be convincing, if governments did not levy custom duties, nor raise taxes, and if no political forces were ever at work trying to get protection by way of a taxing of some other economic groups, and if there were no struggle for shifting the incidence of taxation to other shoulders. Moreover, in a country like Germany the working class was steeped in socialistic economic theories. The real issue was that economic issues had to be settled not only in accordance with the political needs of the hour, but in accordance with more or less deep-seated notions about the right organization of the commonwealth. Economic questions were really political questions. The working class wanted to get political power; they meant to use it for the organizing of economics on a socialistic basis; the employers desired to prevent them from keeping political power, as they objected to any change in that direction.

It was quite a hopeless endeavor to make people believe that there was no connection between political power, political parties and business. By advocating a constitution of parliament on a vocational basis a way might be found for safeguarding vested

interests. If a parliament was composed of representatives of economic groups, if each vocation was not represented according to the mere numerical strength of its followers, but according to its "weight" in the national system of production, a preponderance of the propertied classes, or at least a modicum of security for the propertied classes might be achieved. If an employer of fifty thousand workmen had as much voting power as his fifty thousand employees, corresponding to his importance as an employer of labor, his political strength would be far greater than if he merely got the vote of an ordinary citizen, or the same vote as each of the fifty thousand citizens he employed.

It was impossible, of course, to state the project as crudely as this. The democratic spirit of the German people, especially of the working class, was too strong to allow such a very simple lop-sided solution. The general parliament elected on a broad democratic basis, vesting the ultimate sovereignty in the masses, could not be abolished. But it was possible, perhaps, to create a vocational parliament, a kind of second chamber, to which all economic legislation and administration had to be submitted and which was constituted in such a way as to safeguard completely the interests of the different classes and the different vocations. Saint Simon had played with such ideas; so had Prince Bismarck very much later, for very different reasons. If all vocations were properly represented, and if within each vocation care were taken that employers and employees had their proper voting strength, an instrument could be created which was sure to prevent the majorization of any minority. And if each vocation, and each group within each vo-

cation, were considered the true exponents of the interests they represented, no vote could be taken against their will. Everybody was safe from everybody else. This chief beauty of the system, which would have made it equal the famous Polish Diet, prevented its adoption, for it was a system which could produce reports and resolutions, but could never be used as a method of legislation. It was an instrument designed to prevent action, not to bring it about.

Schemes of that sort were very popular for the time being, not only with industrialists and romantic writers, but with that section of the working class which was influenced by Russian ideals. For a system of representation based on vocation smacked somewhat of the Soviet system, representing the workers and the works. It was embodied in the German constitution, but not as its adherents had expected, as a second chamber whose consent was essential for the passing economic legislation, but merely as a consulting body, whose reports had to be asked for whenever economic legislation was intended, but whose findings were in no way binding. It has done a great deal of work in that direction. But it has not done it half as well as Royal Commissions in England or as many parliamentary or congressional committees in England and the United States. It has done a lot of lengthy debating, debates full of useful information sometimes, but certainly not better than a good first-class debate in parliament. It has enabled many of its members to feel like full-blown members of parliament and to enjoy many of the privileges usually granted to those tribunes. It has not brought about any important change in evolving schemes or methods

of dealing with social and economic problems. It has not even purified parliament by drawing the representation of material interests from it. It has merely duplicated the influence of interests by giving them a second platform. Broadly speaking, it has done no harm, for fortunately it never was in a position to do so. It has become a myth, however, full of interest to people outside Germany who don't know much about its working. But it has not solved the problem of the protection of minorities. It has not solved the problem of vocational representation.

To begin with, the proper representation of each group and of every grade in each group is a riddle to which no solution can be found. Nobody can settle the question as to what is the true relation of importance between cotton spinners and boiler makers. Is it the number of men and women employed, or is it the amount of capital invested, or the value of the output put on the market? The distribution of power between the various trades must always be arbitrarily arranged, between trades as well as between employers and employees. The holders of power will see to it that their power is stabilized. This does not make for justice, or for progress. Distribution can be carried out only in a haphazard way, not by the trades interested, but by a sovereign parliament in which interests elected on a democratic, not vocational, basis must be supreme.

Moreover, this parliament will never part with its supreme right of sovereignty: the right to levy taxes which the citizens will not hand over to any vocational body. It will not part with its right to direct foreign affairs, to maintain order, to control the police, to appoint judges and to direct the serv-

ices. None of these functions are mere vocational functions—if the right to manage foreign affairs is not entirely handed over to the professional diplomatic service, and the right to employ the army is not put into the hands of a military junta. If that were the case vocationalism indeed would triumph at the price of a complete dissolution of society. This being so, vocationalism is not the panacea it often has been considered. But it is an outcome of an undercurrent visible all over the world of an effort to organize the commonwealth on mainly economic lines, an effort which is strongly discernible in a movement which scarcely seems to be an economic movement at all—in Fascism.

VI

THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

THE crisis through which European democracy is passing at present is due to two quite distinct series of causes. On the one hand are the particular difficulties inseparably bound up with the working of democratic institutions, difficulties which, so to speak, are an inherent part of democracy. On the other hand there are the difficulties of a general order, the common inheritance of the age, and not especially connected with democracy.

The main problem of parliamentary democracy, that form of democracy which has had to bear the brunt of all attacks, has been the protection of minorities. It must be acknowledged that so far no solution has been found guaranteeing the rights of a permanent minority whose vital interests are attacked by an overbearing, arrogant majority. Great as this danger is, from an abstract point of view, some of the methods for preventing it are fraught with even greater risks to the successful working of normal democratic parliamentary institutions. Even in those cases where there have been no far-going legal restrictions to the exercise of the power of a majority, minorities have found many a way for protecting themselves. Since obstruction and filibustering were invented and perfected long-suffering majorities have often been at the mercy of belligerous minorities.

Moreover, in nearly all parliamentary bodies the issues so far have become rather complex. Parties

and groups are not divided by one simple line of demarcation. Economic, political, cultural and religious influences are working on the formation of parties. As a result completely isolated minorities or absolute compact majorities have become rare. In most cases minorities have succeeded in finding an "affinity." The parliamentary alliances brought about in this way have sometimes been more picturesque than logical. But the real test of any institution, even of a parliamentary alliance, is whether it does work or not. After all, the parliamentary alliance between Roman Catholic Irish Nationalists and Nonconformist English Liberals was certainly far less incongruous than the political alliance between republican France and autocratic Russia, which was one of the outstanding features of European policies before the War.

Recently the system of parliamentary alliances has become somewhat modified. Constitutional and religious questions have been receding, economic questions have come to the forefront. The results have been all sorts of combinations between "economic blocks." These mainly economic alliances, created with the object of getting a parliamentary majority, have not always been more logical than their prototypes in international affairs. The alliance against capitalists wedded to the institution of private ownership, between farmers holding to the principle of private ownership and of workmen opposing it, is certainly not quite logical. But it has taken place, and has often seemed to work quite efficiently. The preponderance of economic problems is slowly bringing about a splitting of parties into economic groups. The main dividing line between employers and em-

ployees, which is due to the stratification on class lines, is by no means always the most visible line of cleavage. Trade groups are bound to be very strong, and the clash of interests between groups related to each other and organized on similar social principles, is very often much greater than the struggle between classes. Whenever the question of a protective tariff has been raised, the fight between cotton spinners and cotton weavers has frequently been more bitter than the struggle between master spinners and their workmen. The lines dividing classes, trades and occupations overlap continually. There is a great danger of parliaments splitting into economic groups, none of them strong enough to rule the land, none of them clearly separated from other groups, but sufficiently hostile to be unable to fuse with them. Practically all over the world the days of plain parliamentary majorities are over. The two-party system may not be dead, but it is certainly no longer working through the juxtaposition of two big homogeneous groups, each of them aligned along one clearly defined pivotal position. Wherever it goes on existing it is rather a combination of many distinct groups, each of them often finding their nearest affinity across the main dividing line.

Parliamentary government to-day is either carried on by a minority through the collusion of another group or party, or it is taken over by a coalition formed through a combination of several groups. In the first case the government must be weak, for it depends on outward assistance. In the second case it cannot be strong, whenever the different groups composing it are fundamentally hostile to each other. A coalition government formed by moderate and ad-

vanced liberals is quite a sound combination in any country. A coalition composed of socialists and anti-socialists is not a very good mixture, as long as both groups have faith in their fundamental principles. The compromise they have to conclude is bound to disgrace them among the electorate. Each wing is prevented from carrying out such legislation as is dearest to its heart, and compelled to accept some measures, at least, it plainly detests. But the interests of minorities are quite well served with such a system, and existing minorities rather cling to it for fear of being permanently out-voted by a new array of parties on more constructive lines.

This state of affairs has been greatly strengthened by the introduction of proportional representation. Proportional representation is an excellent method of making parliament the mirror of the nation, reflecting all the various shades of interests and opinions which form its component parts. It might have been a perfect system in the olden days of political dualism, when parliament had to face the Crown and was rightly considered the proper representation of the interests of different regional and vocational groups. In these monistic days, when parliament is "sovereign," proportional representation weakens government action, inasmuch as it is bound to increase the strength of the opposition. Even where there are but two parties the margin by which governments hold their majorities is apt to be small. But as minority interests are very wide awake, and as there is a widespread fear in all countries that the majority one day will sacrifice the minority, proportional representation has been waxing strong. For all groups and groupings are haunted by a spectre of

days gone by, that in the near future under the regime of modern democracy the many will plunder the few, as in the past the few have plundered the many.

Thus a double result has been attained. On the one hand parliaments have broken up into different economic groups or blocks. Majorities very often can be formed only by what might be called "unholy" alliances. On the other hand the fear of parties becoming aligned along some sharply drafted fundamental economic principle like Socialism and Anti-socialism is making for the continuation of this hotch-potch state of affairs. Minorities are terrified to such a degree by the spectre of being out-voted by majorities that they are willing to coalesce with practically any other group. The formation of sound majorities has become almost impossible, and the parliamentary machine is breaking down under the great strain put upon it.

In some cases, for example in Austria, where party alignments were comparatively simple, a similar kind of paralysis is brought about by the fact that the strength of the economic groups confronting each other as organized parties is fairly equal. There is a kind of permanent balance of power, protecting the minority's vital interests, but preventing the majority from carrying out their policy in a vigorous way. For political parties composed of compact economic groups elected on a proportional vote do not show much variation as long as the existing social stratification is not changed. Organized permanent interests, not arguments and sentiments are the decisive factors in an election. There rarely is a landslide and there often is a permanent deadlock. There

is a continued wrangle between opposed economic sections, as neither the capitalist nor the socialist group are able to impose their will on the opponents, the nation itself is paralyzed.

It is this state of affairs which has produced the clamor for a dictator who is willing to do the things the nation wants to be done, but who is not subject to the rule of economic groups or even of a majority. This accounts for the rise not only of Mussolini, but for the way reforms had to be carried out in Austria and in Hungary by the League of Nations, by the appointment of a foreign economic dictator, not responsible to the masses in whose interests he is supposed to act. And it accounts too for that quaint state of affairs which existed for some time in Germany and in France where parliament, instead of passing those acts of legislation which are urgently needed, had delegated to its parliamentary government almost unrestricted powers of legislation and administration for a limited period. Anybody looking at these facts may easily come to the conclusion that democracy, as parliamentary democracy, is doomed. If the government work can be carried on only by a foreign dictator, or by putting parliament out of action whenever its action is really important, surely this seems to be sufficient proof for the assertion that parliamentarism has run its course, and that the days of democratic parliamentary government are over.

Before the War the enemies of parliamentary government all over the Continent were never tired of assuring the public that parliamentary democracy might be an excellent system for the ordinary days of peace, but that it never could stand the strain of war. Experience has not borne them out. It has

clearly shown that democracies can fight a war, and can successfully go to the finish. It is quite another question whether as democracies they can survive the consequences of such a huge war and the economic upheaval following in its wake. Experience has shown, moreover, that military defeat, if it is only big enough, has had an immediate effect upon the constitution of the government which has been subject to it. All over the world, since history began, dynasties have fallen whenever the sword has decided against them. For deep down in the innermost heart men hold the existing government responsible for their fate. A monarchical government, confronted by defeat or by a fruitless peace, is bound to pass through a severe political crisis. Democracy cannot expect to be free from such dangers.

The War destroyed monarchy in Central Europe. With the exception of a very few countries indeed, democracy holds sway to-day all over the world. In many parts of the world it is fairly new. It never has weathered a storm before; it has to weather a hurricane now. Monarchies crumbled to pieces, when the hope of a victorious ending of the War had to be abandoned. The newly established republics dissociated themselves from the beginning from the policy of the old regime. The treatment they received at the hands of their sister-democracies did not differ in any way from the treatment victors had meted out to the vanquished in the days of autocracy. Quite the contrary, the newly established republics were treated very harshly in a democratic peace. Democracy, it seemed, did not stand for generosity when victorious, nor did it command respect when defeated. The shock the revolution had given to the social fabric

was greatly increased by the impact of the peace treaties. Upheavals followed; there was dislocation. Inflation spread, society was brought to the brink of disintegration, classes and groups turned against each other, as is the natural consequence of violent changes in the value of money. There was such turmoil all over Europe as there never had been before. Was it surprising that the democratic machine, newly constructed in many countries, was very nearly breaking down under that strain? Is this crisis of European democracy due to the inherent fault of parliamentary democracy, or is it not, rather, due to other effects of the gigantic War, which certainly was not the outcome of democratic rule?

The answer is very simple. The crisis of European democracy is primarily due to the crisis of European life. The ways of dealing with that crisis might perhaps be a little different if other methods of government had been available. The crisis itself would not disappear. Neither Spain, nor Italy, nor Russia, countries which for the time being have done with parliamentary democracy, have so far been ahead of their rivals in the race for better government and greater happiness for their citizens.

This being so, there is hope that European democracy may survive the present storm, but it will not survive it if the international crisis which started ten years ago is not successfully settled and if it is but the forerunner of other catastrophes.

Parliamentary democracy has been defined as the method of settling political conflicts by way of conference. Like all forms of democracy it is based on the belief in the equality of men. It starts from the conviction that all men, rich or poor, white or black,

have living, immortal souls; that fact, and that fact alone, entitles them to participation in the government of the commonwealth. Modern men have lost that wonderful faith which animated an early democracy, willing to disregard, by words as well as by deeds, all distinctions between races, classes, trades and religions. A new creed has risen based on the acknowledgment of a diversity of men, taking account of distinctions in color and capacity, in intellect and efficiency. It has been greatly strengthened by biological facts. These facts as far as they go cannot be denied. But we must not build on mere biological facts a social system in support of convenient prejudices. The diversity of races and classes may be accepted, for experience has shown it to exist. But we must be very careful neither to attribute permanence to certain features because we have not yet seen them change, nor to attach practical functional values to certain physical capacities. We cannot maintain any longer the idea of the complete uniformity of mankind, such as missionary democracy harbored in days gone by. We must believe in diversity; but diversity need not mean social inferiority or social superiority. It merely means different capacity for different tasks. We must assume that "in my Father's house are many mansions," and believe in what has been rightly called "cultural pluralism." If we do that, and only if we do that, is there a chance of getting over racial frictions which, in these days of fairly free migration, no amount of segregation can completely settle. And if we allow racial hatred at home or abroad, not merely as disturbing factors in daily life, but as biological laws which entitle certain strata to permanent superiority and compel

others to permanent inferiority,—a growth of hatred on a scientific basis,—democracy will not be safe.

And democracy is not safe, if we erect or maintain a social order in which property does accumulate in the hands of comparatively few men at the expense of the many. The days have passed by when it was possible to concentrate land and wealth in a fairly few hands who controlled political power at the same time, leaving the masses stupid and subservient. A kind of industrial feudalism may be developed in some countries. It cannot last. Modern capitalism wants intelligent, skilled workingmen. Intelligence cannot be restricted to those spheres of a man's life from which employers derive profit, and be excluded from those where it may make political trouble. Having embarked in what is called modern capitalism, we have to go on, and to travel the road we want an intelligent population to follow. We have created such a population and spread it all over the world, and we are going on doing it. We wanted to teach them and we gave them education. We cannot stop. Moreover, we cannot any longer withhold political rights from them. They have got the vote, and they are going to keep it. They cannot be expected any longer to follow their masters to the polls, as they did in days gone by. They have got political influence and they will use it. And it is impossible to bring about or maintain a state of affairs *where the many have the votes, and the few have the wealth.* It is not very likely that the new order of things, which is in process of evolution, will be an unadulterated socialistic order. The spread of private property all over the world has been very great. The millions and millions of small owners of property which can be found in

nearly every country will resist socialism and expropriation. But, wherever private monopolies are formed which enable their owners to wield control over the rest of the people, and whenever these monopolies cannot be destroyed, as they must be maintained in the interest of production, the commonwealth will not refrain from regulating them, if democracy is to be safe.

Moreover, the world could not live in peace if the social conflict between the "Haves" and the "Have Nots" were settled at home, but maintained abroad. The world will not be safe for democracy, if it is divided into groups of countries, not only of unequal strength or unequal wealth, but of quite unequal opportunities. A state of affairs cannot last, where the great undeveloped portions of the globe are a kind of trust to be exploited for the benefit of a few Powers who deny others access to this wealth. International relations have in some ways become much closer since the Great War, for a network of connections between debtors and creditors is spreading all over the world. It has become inverted, so to speak, from what it was in the days gone by. In the past the debtor was rich, at least in future possibilities. To-day he is comparatively poor. International economic relations will be safe only if the international monopoly of wealth existing to-day is mitigated by international co-operation. No League of Nations can stand, however complete be its list of members, if its basis be that undesirable state of individual countries—that the many have the votes, and the few have the wealth.

All over the world, whether it be in home affairs or in foreign affairs, poverty, hopeless poverty, and not wealth, has always been the basis of social unrest,

the seed-bed of violence. Poor countries, not wealthy countries, are the danger to the world. Flagrant inequality at home, and flagrant inequality abroad, coupled with the feeling that nothing can be done to improve the existing state of affairs, must bring about that atmosphere of unrest from which violence always has sprung. The Great War was not due to the economic forces fighting each other in 1914, but it might never have broken out if there had been economic contentment, if there had not been on the one side that feeling of envy which the "Have Not" had for the "Have," and if on the other side there had not been the fear that that privileged position might be in danger.

The Great War has shaken European economics to their foundation. It has on the one hand brought about a state of affairs extremely difficult to mend, and on the other hand a spirit of violence impatient of delay. Thousands and thousands are tired of waiting for the natural recovery, while parliaments debate and governments are supposed to act. They had been looking forward to victory; it did not come. Later on they were told of a social millennium; it did not materialize. Now they are willing to break the world in which they live, because to them it seems beyond mending. They want a short cut, and they call for a dictator, for his are to be the ways of violence to which they have been inured. A generation has risen which does not any longer believe in "order." The government of the world, as men and women saw it in the days before the War, has broken down completely. Religious systems have failed. Whatever remained of faith in God has assumed an almost "tribal character." During the War

nations so monopolized God that, so to speak, he has lost his universal position. The world is no longer ruled by Providence or Immanent Natural Law; the world is ruled by the strong, the new teaching runs, and only by the strong. The forces shaping the fate of mankind are not influenced by a law of nature; they are set in motion by the will to action. Social schemes, carefully thought out, are of no importance; what matters is the will to carry them out. The state and its order are denied by powerful individuals.

Moreover, the preponderance of economic interests has brought about a state of affairs of a parliamentary deadlock. The interests of the working classes and the interests of the capitalists are facing each other. No permanent majority can be formed, and as no permanent homogeneous majority is available, there really is a deadlock. The government is paralyzed, the state split in twain. While the world is going to pieces, rival social systems are fighting each other. It is a fight on paper, a fight of arguments. Nothing happens, for the parliamentarians, supported by the bureaucrats, have learned only the art of how to stop action, not of how to bring it about. People are sick of this state of affairs. What do they care for democracy, if democracy does not make good? What is the good of asking the consent of the people to the acts of their government, when the people cannot agree, and the governments cannot act? The nations are dissolved in economic fragments, fighting each other bitterly in a purposeless economic struggle. They are in danger of losing their national consciousness. They do not know where to turn for unity of mind and purpose, for they have no leader. In all nations there is a large band of

men, most of them young, willing to act; it does not matter in which direction, provided they find a leader. And in the misery of their hearts, in the hopelessness of their situation, they prayed that such a leader might rise.

When Mussolini grasped power in Italy, he infused new life into these abstract yearnings. Mussolini is not a professional soldier, strutting about with clanking sword, who believes in government by "orders," because he knows of no other ways of ruling men. But he none the less is a fervent believer in the creed of violence. Sorel and Vilfred Pareto have been his masters. His violence is not merely the outcome of a masterful mind, but is based on the deep-seated conviction that government without the consent of the governed is quite a proper way of ruling mankind. In that respect his theory and his practice are the same as those of Lenin. But while Lenin, being a disciple of Marx, had a clear conception of an ideal social world, Mussolini's mind is not set on any Utopia. He believes, with Sorel, that the will to act and the power to act will bring about a commonwealth as it ought to be, very different from any preconceived plan. Why have a plan, if you know how to act? He is a Nationalist and not interested in mankind in general. He believes in Italy, but the real foundation of his faith is his belief in Mussolini. In that respect he is not very different from the dictators of by-gone days, who saw the hand of God in every decree they themselves issued.

Having no firm social creed he is sometimes on the side of the working class and sometimes an advocate of the capitalists. Man as a theoretical proposition does not interest him: he does not start from a con-

ception of man, as he ought to be, but from man as he is, following in that direction as his master that great founder of political realism, that wicked man from Florence, whom moralizing statesmen have held up as Anti-Christ and whom practicing statesmen have followed far more dilligently than they followed Christ, Niccolo Machiavelli.

His movement was originally a bourgeois movement, directed against Red Terrorism, and a national movement against internationalism, opposing violence by force. In that respect its only original feature has been the use of castor oil.

It was bound, however, to gain a deeper foundation, when people realized the danger of a permanent class deadlock caused through economic cleavage: When they became conscious of the impending paralysis of national action, they acclaimed the leader who could bridge the gulf. His example seemed to show that it was possible for a man to rise from the people, and to rule the people without their consent, but for the common good. And all over Central Europe there arose a prayer for the coming of a dictator, for the advent of a great leader, a man who could either lead his people from the bondage of the Egyptians, or who would at least pull down the pillars, and bring down the temple on the heads of the Philistines. It is this spirit of violence, engendered by the War, and the feeling of despair, brought about by the peace, which has made the tasks of parliamentary democracy so very hard. As long as they exist to any considerable degree, democracy is not safe.

I think they are slowly abating. I think in a few months, or perhaps years, people all over the world will see that "force is no remedy." There have been

dictators in the past who wielded power unrestricted by parliamentary trammels. They believed in themselves, and their nations believed in them. They considered themselves, rightly perhaps, the true representatives of the people, having broken to pieces existing representations. They have gone part of the way, free from support and free from hindrance, depending on the Inner Voice. Some of them, like Oliver Cromwell or Napoleon, have been among the world's greatest figures. They have cut the Gordian knot with a mighty sword. Their work did not last. They had to rebuild the institutions they had destroyed. They quickly in some way or other had to introduce forms of parliamentary representation, to help them along in their task, thus divesting themselves of part at least of the power they had just taken by force. They had to rely on helpers, and, however well they may have chosen them, some of them were bound to fail them. And no dictator, so far as my knowledge goes, has succeeded in finding a successor able enough to carry on his work. Would a modern dictator, elected by the vote of the people, free to do his work unfettered by parliamentary opinion, succeed, not only in mastering some of the questions of to-day, but in laying the foundations of a political system likely to last? Would his reign be more than a passing interregnum, at the end of which there would be no heir? Parliaments and parliamentary institutions do not always produce great men; democratic governments are sometimes mediocre. It is possible to carry on the work of a democracy with mediocre men. But a mediocre dictator is clearly impossible. And even a personality forceful enough to wield power by himself, not dependent on advisers and satellites, strong

enough to quell parliamentary opposition as well as a general strike,—even he could not give his nation the guarantee of a competent successor. His success—great as it might be—would merely be the beginning of another struggle between a personal ruler and the representatives of the nation. The phase of "political dualism" which has filled so many pages in the history of mankind would be reached once again, and in the end there would be a new democracy. Is it really necessary that mankind, or at least European mankind, should take that round-about road? Can we not learn from the dangers of days gone by? Must we always go on changing the forms of government?

It seems to me, however, that it is not merely a question of *form of government;* it is a question of *spirit.* If the spirit of greed, of materialism and of violence, which has ruled large parts of mankind so far, is going to survive, democracy will not stand. In that case it is scarcely worth while that it should stand. If we can get the better of it, if we can remember that the foundations of society must be based on justice, sympathy and consideration, democracy will survive the present crisis.

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